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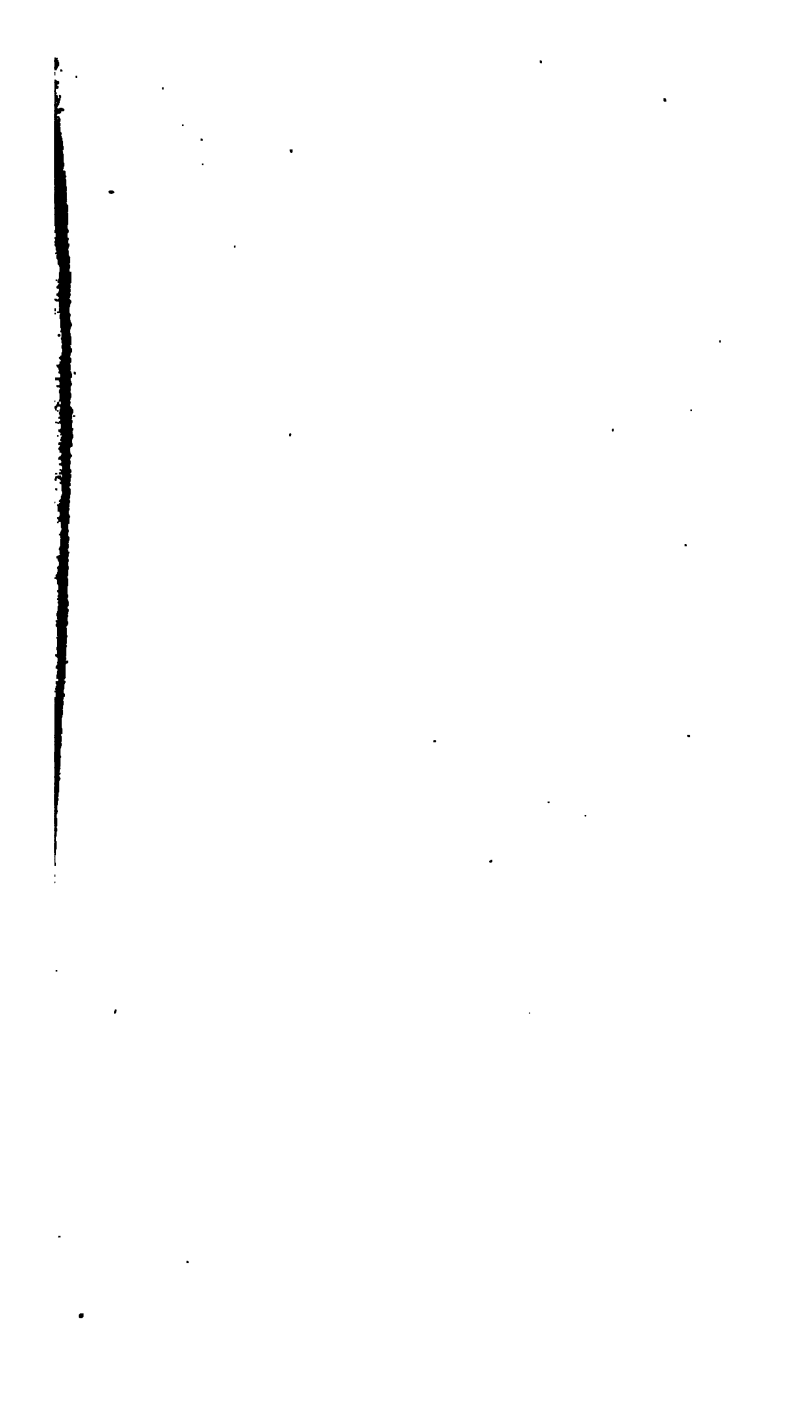
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S. H. 1028

A DISSERTATION
ON THE
ORIGIN, NATURE, FUNCTIONS, AND ORDER
OF THE
PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.



BY
JOHN WILSON,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, MONTROSE.

Altius his nihil est; hæc sunt fastigia mundi.

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RALPH WARDLAW, D. D.

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,

In Testimony of

THE ESTEEM AND RESPECT OF

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Work is professedly didactic. The object of it is to give a merely doctrinal view of our Lord's priesthood, and to exhibit the subject in such points of light as, without the aid of formal application, may disclose to thoughtful readers its various practical bearings. The moral influence of the truths discussed is so extensive, and so fully bears upon the well-being of the unrenewed, and the comfort, holiness, and illumination of the faithful, that an adequate endeavour to develope and enforce it, would be equal to writing an entire system of practical and experimental theology. There is nothing connected with the moral welfare of man, viewed either as a sinner or as a saint, for which the doctrines respecting the priesthood of Christ do not afford matter of conviction, of correction, or of instruction in righteousness. To have traced, with fullness and effect, all the moral tendencies of these,

would have been impossible, without writing four or five volumes instead of one; and to have pointed out, in a sparing manner, but a few, would have been comparatively useless, while it would have seriously interrupted the continuity of the discussion. It was hence thought best to omit practical application altogether, and to leave the deduction of appropriate inferences to the judgment of the reader.

Doctrinal teaching, as well as experimental, has its peculiar advantages. In the pulpit, it is true, no man ought to confine himself, in any of his discourses, to either doctrine, precept, or promise. There he ought always so to combine abstract truth, experimental statement, and practical application, as to put it beyond the power of any hearer to characterise him as a preacher either of naked doctrines, of mere experiences, or of dry morality. In written instruction, however, it is different. Addressing men through the medium of the press, he may indulge a closeness of thinking, a disposition to illustrate simple truth, and a confinement of his attention to the information of the mind, which would be wholly unwarrantable in the pulpit. His written discourse may effect what could not have been accomplished by his spoken. By means of it, a reader may acquire a clearness and an expansion in his views of doctrine, which both might have been otherwise unattainable, and which may render his heart much more impressible when he regularly attends on

pastoral exhortation. From doctrine flows experience, and from experience practice. In proportion as the first is understood, will the two latter be realized. In it lies the instrumental power by which both are produced and carried to perfection,—a power which will be felt in all its beneficial tendencies just in the degree in which the truths of God, and especially such fundamental truths as those that respect the priestly character and work of Immanuel, are conceived of with accuracy and understood in their connexion.

Even controversial discussion is not without its uses. Many, indeed, regard it as what they are pleased to call 'a necessary evil.' To speak of evil being in the Bible, however, is somewhat strange; yet controversial writing is there in abundance. To a certain extent, in fact, it is unavoidable, and, if properly viewed, is but a species of didactic instruction. Every truth, whether capital or subordinate, has its opposite error into which men professing to be Christians may have fallen. From this they must be reclaimed, either by an exposure of their own unfounded sentiments, or by a vindication of the doctrines which they have thrown aside. Before them, a truth must be both illustrated and proved,—evidence must be furnished at once of its own correctness, and of the erroneousness of the tenet to which it is opposed. Hence the necessity and the nature, the goodness and not the evil of controversy.

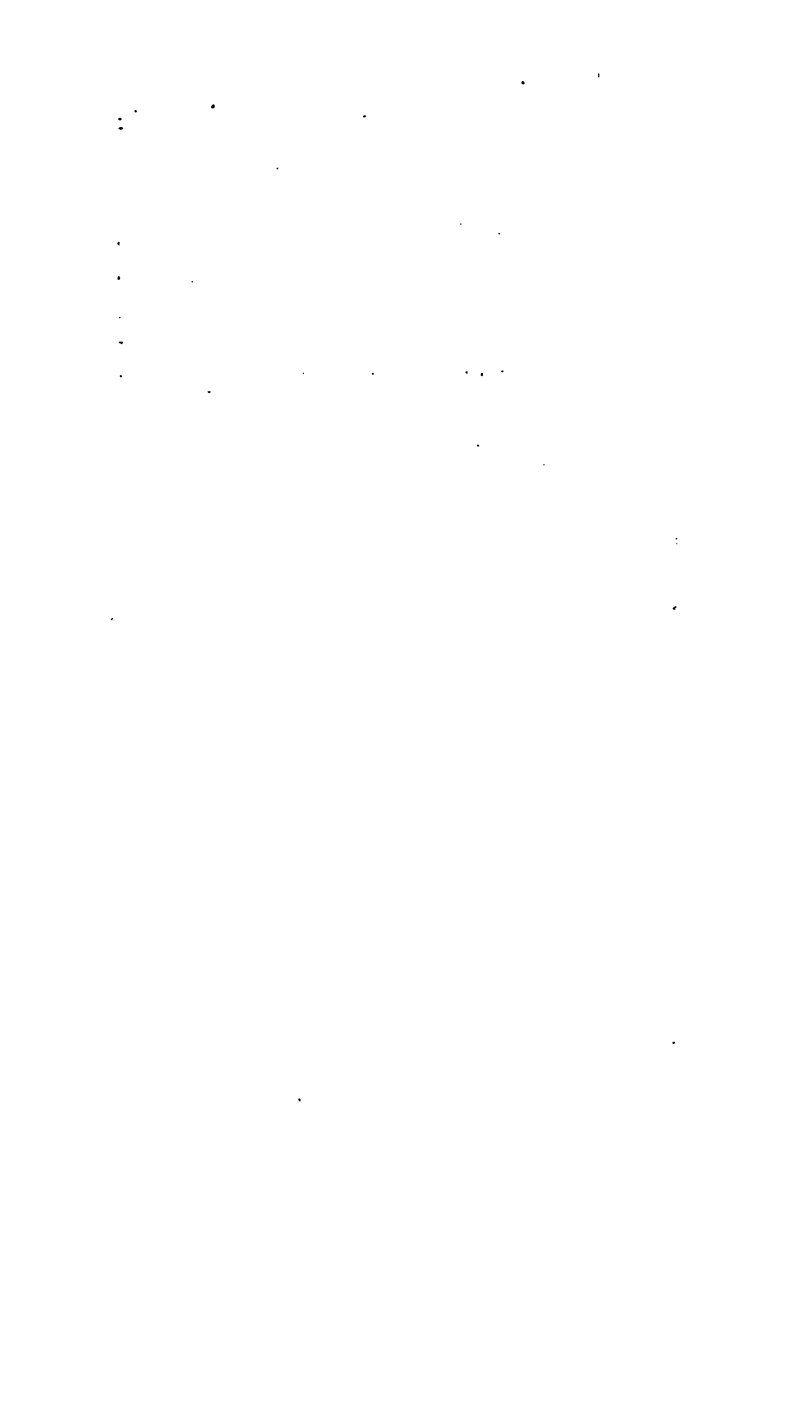
In the following Dissertation, controversial paragraphs have been necessarily inserted. They have been as sparingly introduced, however, as was consistent with justice being done to the subjects of which they treat. Endeavours, too, have been made to render them useful without being offensive. They have not, therefore, been directed against any particular writers, but have been restricted to a mere refutation of errors which, in some quarter or other, are known to be received.

In composing the Book, it was an object to make a regular ascent from the rudimental to the higher doctrines of the subject discussed. Each successive chapter was designed, in the train of thought which it contains, to emerge from the preceding, to treat in order the particular part of the Dissertation assigned to it, and, in its turn, to lay the foundation for the next division of the Work. An effort was thus made to 'leave the first principles and go on to perfection,'—to commence with a simple view of the Origin and General Nature of the Priesthood, to proceed with an explanation of its Functions in the order in which the work of them was performed, and to finish with an exhibition of the supremacy, glory, perpetuity, and perfection of Christ as 'the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.'

The subjects treated in the Appendices could not, it was thought, have been rightly passed

over in a work on the Priesthood ; yet they are such that the introduction of them to the body of the Book could not have been done without interfering with the plan on which it is written. Rather, therefore, than that they should have marred the unity and method of the Dissertation, they were written in an appended form, and separately placed at the end of the volume.

Montrose, October, 1828.



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A DISSERTATION

ON THE

PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

THE ORIGIN AND PREFIGURATIONS OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD.

As soon as Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit, they felt upon their mind the most oppressive sense of the divine displeasure. They had hitherto experienced the most exalted felicity in the enjoyment of God's presence; but now that they had lost the moral rectitude which was inseparably connected with the happiness they derived from it, they knew of nothing which was more offensively unwelcome, and would have preferred annihilation itself to the necessity of again beholding it. The awfully altered and troubled state of their own hearts convinced them, that a lofty interception had been raised between their souls, and the possession of his complacency. His countenance, they expected to

see no longer beaming with love, but covered only with wrathful and menacing frowns. They knew that they had merited his heaviest indignation ; their memories were haunted by the ghosts of their murdered joys ; their consciences were agonized by a survey of the fearful ingratitude and the enormous wickedness of the act of apostacy ; their anticipations portrayed a futurity filled up with unqualified gloom and desolation and despair ;—and it was then, that while they remembered how all their former delight had issued from the divine favor, how this had been forfeited by guilt and supplanted by the tremendous anger of judicial vengeance, and how the Deity would forthwith reveal himself as their enemy, they sunk beneath the burden of their disastrous wretchedness, struggled to throw it off by cutting the cords that bound them to his government, and, at the sound of his voice in the cool of the day, hid themselves from his presence among the trees of the garden.*

Their attention was fixed upon the sin which they had perpetrated, and which was incessantly displaying itself to their view, and proclaiming itself the single-handed author of their ruin ; and, persuaded that, until it were destroyed, there would be no forthcoming of the smiles of God, their powers of invention were immediately called into exercise for discovering a method of concealing it, and they, therefore, on the perception of their nakedness, ‘sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.’†

This was their first rude attempt to effect a concealment of their sinfulness,—an attempt which was induced by the conviction that God cannot be propitiated but by a destruction of it, and that wherever he beholds it, there will be an unmingled outpouring of his vindictive anger. They soon perceived, however, that there is a penetration

misleading and has since been removed from the text
 * Gen. iii. 8. † Gen. iii. 7.

in the eye of Omniscience which goes instantaneously through the thickest material covering; for, in defiance of that with which they had endeavoured to hide their moral shame, they were arraigned at the bar of God immediately on his first appearance in the garden, and were dragged forth to receive their merited condemnation. The suddenness with which they were seized, notwithstanding the investment of themselves with the aprons, taught them that there is an aggravation in human guilt, which not only turns it into an insuperable prevention of every gracious communication, but which also renders every effort, on the part of man, to destroy it altogether futile; and the immediateness with which their arraignment was followed by the utterance and the partial execution of the curse to which they had made themselves obnoxious, shewed them that, however much they might be convinced of the necessity of a process of reconciliation, and urged forward to attempt the execution of it, there had taken place a destruction of their powers, which absolutely unfitted them for being agents in its accomplishment. Nothing which they had hitherto done, either in the clothing of their bodies, or the concealment of their persons, had tended, in the remotest way, to keep out of the view of God a single feature of their crime, or to diminish the soreness of wrath which it had incurred; and, in looking forward to the future, there was sufficient material in all this for sustaining the inference, that any subsequent endeavours which they might make, would be equally unavailing.

Where, then, were the ruined pair to look for deliverance?—‘And the Lord God said unto the Serpent, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.’ *

* Gen. iii. 14. 15.

They were here told that there required to be instituted a mediatorship for the direct purpose of neutralizing the effects of the fall, that it was needful for it to embody a ministration in which blood should be shed, that an arduous struggle should be long maintained between it and the tempter, and that it should be erected in the person of one who was expressly destined, and abundantly qualified for the work. Along, therefore, with the lesson of their own helplessness in the thorough abortiveness of their former endeavours, and the lesson of the incalculable enormity of sin in their having received, on account of it, a sentence of such unmeasured endurance of wretchedness; there was brought before their minds a display of divine mercy and wisdom, so marvellously stupendous and so richly interwoven with sovereign love, as to merit its becoming the supreme and unintermitted object of their adoring contemplation. The promise instructed them in the only way in which divine goodness could conduct them back to their former sinlessness, and impressed upon them the indispensability of placing upon the Saviour whom it revealed, a firm and continued and exclusive dependence for conveying them up the ascent of moral renovation. In its leading features of a work of satisfaction to the law, and of expiation for sin, they had the method of recovery set before them; and they were required to yield to it an implicit faith, and to repair to it as the only channel through which a communication of divine mercy can be made to the guilty.

While they were thus carried beyond themselves for salvation, and taught to look for it entirely through the meritorious sufferings and actings of the promised Deliverer, there was seen to exist in their minds an inability to fix their thoughts upon spiritual things which, unless a sensible medium of observing them were instituted, would

ruinously counteract the design for which the promise had been given. The doctrine of atonement with which they had chiefly to do, is of such a peculiar description in itself, and was so completely different from every thing with which they had been hitherto acquainted, that, without the appointment of appropriate symbols to metaphorize the things which it embodies, it was, in a manner, impossible for them to form a proper conception of its import. The terms in which the promise was expressed, were adequate enough to shew them that there would, in the bruising of his heel, be personal suffering by the Saviour, as well as mediatorial triumph over the serpent, in his bruising his head; but of themselves, they fell utterly short of giving such a full and luminous portraiture of the sacrificial character of Christ, as would sufficiently explain its nature, and draw forth upon it the requisite attention, faith, and admiration of the apostates. In order, therefore, to illustrate and bring home the various truths which this first revelation contained, and to supersede all the obstacles that existed to prevent a perception of them in their genuine glory and importance, the Lord God not only tore away the fig-leaf covering with which an attempt had been made to conceal the shame of sin, but also made coats of skin to Adam and his wife, and clothed them.*

Before this could have been accomplished, he evidently gave instructions to the man to slay certain species of animals, and, while the blood and the carcase of them were sacrificially disposed of, to appropriate their skins to the purpose of covering his body. By the taking away of the one vesture and the giving of the other, there was a most forcible illustration furnished of the radical doctrine of the gospel, that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and that a sinner can be restored to God's favor solely by the

* Gen. iii. 21.

obedience of Christ. The leaves which Adam sewed together, and threw around him, could, in a moral way, conceal nothing; but the garment which was made for him by Jehovah, completely hid from view all the shame of the transgression. It was furnished from an animal whose slaughter and immolation were a striking emblem of the great oblation by which, in the fulness of time, sin was to be taken away; and it was itself a symbol of the perfectness with which the righteousness of Christ so arrays the sinner, as to make him the proper subject of divine remission and acceptance. The necessity, previous to its being procured, of shedding blood, shewed the impossibility of obtaining pardon or moral transformation, by any other means than the Redeemer's expiation; the priority of the slaughter to the investment, illustrated the intimate connexion between an existing satisfaction to the law, and an act of justification; the divine command and warrant for the procedure, indicated the high complacency which is felt by the Deity in the work which it symbolized; and the part which Adam took in conducting it, was a partial representation of the nature of priestly actings. In the institution which accompanied the giving of the first promise, there was thus an ample apparatus raised for directing forward the views and the faith of men to the future Saviour, and for holding up to their mind a lively and animating exhibition of the wonderful work which he was destined to perform. In the facts, therefore, of the communication respecting the clothing of Adam and his wife with coats of skin, there is a complete disclosure made of the origin of a priesthood, of the manner in which its functions were first typically discharged, and of the circumstances in which the observance of sacrificial rites was introduced to the world.

There can be no doubt that the skin of which the coats were made, held that place in the prefiguration of

the work of Christ which we have assigned to it, and that the making of it into garments was preceded by a sacerdotal ministration. It was not till after the flood that permission was given to use the inferior animals as food, and, if they were slain before it, there must either have been a consumption of them on the altar, or the sinful and unpermitted deprivation of a creature of its life. The scriptures do not, indeed, directly declare that the first slaughter was sacrificial; yet, that it was so, they assume, not only by stamping the approbation of heaven upon the action, but likewise by affirming that the same connexion which existed in respect to it, between the destruction of the victim and the use of its skin, was uniform in the Levitical Sanctuary. 'And the priest that offereth any man's burnt-offering, even the priest shall have to himself the skin of the burnt-offering which he hath offered.*' An appropriation of it was made by him in essentially the same circumstances as those in which it was taken by Adam, and turned to the use for which God had appointed it. It was procured by the Levite from those animals only, which, in compliance with the divine will, he slew in the character of victims, and became his property, simply because he discharged the functions of a typical priesthood. There is hence the most remarkable parallelism between the two cases; and the amplest reason for inferring from it, that the appropriation was made by Adam upon fundamentally the same principles.

The truth of this is still more apparent from the obvious corruptions of the Adamic ministration, which were found in the sacred performances of the early heathens. One of their writers describes the priests of their gods as 'clothed in skins according to established custom;†' another of them represents a sacrificial offerer as 'squatting

* Lev. vii. 8. † Virg. *ÆN.* viii. 282.

on his knees upon the skin of the sacrificed sheep, and putting the head and feet of the victim upon his head;’* and their authors, in general, testify that similar observances were common amongst almost all the pagans of antiquity. They are known to have derived the groundwork of their rites from the early oral revelations of the divine will, and from the religious creed and practices of true theists, in the patriarchal ages. The reception, therefore, and general prevalence amongst them of this particular custom, is accounted for only, by assuming that the divine communication to Adam, appointed both the sacrificial oblation of the carcase, and the investment of the offerer with its skin, that the rite was transferred from him to the successive generations of his posterity, and that, while it continued in its purity with those who remained the disciples of genuine theism, it intermingled itself with those gradual corruptions of it, which in various quarters, finally terminated in idolatry. It may consequently be inferred, that the first person who acted as a typical priest was Adam, that the offering which he presented was expressly singled out by God, that both the actings of the priest, and the sufferings of the victim were designed to be symbolical of the work of Christ, and that the whole machinery of a typical ministration, was directly raised upon the first promise of the Saviour.

Immediately after Adam, we find both Cain and Abel presenting offerings to God. ‘And, in process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering; but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect.’† The reason of the divine acceptance of Abel’s sacrifice, and of

* Luc. De Deâ Syr. vol. ii. p. 913. † Gen. iv. 3—5.

the rejection of Cain's, is affirmed by Paul to have been the one's possession, and the other's destitution of faith. 'By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*' This tacitly discovers the fact, that a divine communication had previously been made, commanding the immolation of sacrificial victims, and investing men with sacerdotal authority to present them; and it furnishes additional proof that this was nothing else than the statement respecting the clothing of our first parents, which was appended to the announcement they received of the Messiah. Notwithstanding the conjectures which it is supposed unaided reason can make regarding some general features of the divine will; nothing can properly be viewed as religious truth, or as the matter of faith toward God, but what is expressly revealed. Nor, from the fundamental principle, that the will of God is the exclusive rule of deciding upon moral actions, can any thing be acceptable to the Deity, but what he has explicitly enjoined. The facts, therefore, that the offering of Abel was looked upon with divine complacency, and that this was in consequence of his possessing and exercising faith, afford the plainest evidence that there was a testimony of God before him, and that he perceived and acted upon a direct warrant which it gave him, for the conduct he pursued.

This holds equally true of his priesthood in the abstract, and of the exercise of its prerogatives in sacrificing the firstlings of his flock. Unless he had been divinely authorized to assume it, and to perform its work, he could not, with impunity, have dared to burn fire on the altar, and much less could he have done it in such a way as to secure the approbation of God. 'No man taketh this ho-

* Heb. xi. 4.

nor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* If, therefore, he not only acted as a priest, but, in the performance of sacerdotal duties, 'obtained witness that he was righteous,' the Divine Being must already have had erected the office, described the bearing which it had upon the future work of Christ, and held up the effective sacrifice which, in the fulness of time, was to be offered, as the object of that faith which could make the presentation of animals an acceptable and profitable act.

It hence seems apparent that, at the first institution of the priestly office, there was a divine right communicated to each individual to occupy it, and to perform its duties for himself. Had there been a confinement of it to the father of a family, or to the first-born male, or had there been any other limitation to the right of holding it, the fact of Abel's ministration, and of the success which attended it, is wholly unaccountable. As Adam was still alive when his son sacrificed, there must have been express ground for the one, as well as for the other assuming the character, which was contemporaneously sustained by them both. And the same thing must have been true of Cain. The reason why his offering was rejected, had no connexion with the presence or the absence of authority to present it, but lay entirely in his want of faith in the great truths which it symbolized,—a circumstance which is itself a proof of his having had power, in virtue of a revelation of the divine will, to perform the work which he undertook. Unbelief, in the prosecution of the undertaking, could not have been his sin, if a permission so much as to enter upon it had not been given him. It was because he had been empowered to act by a divine commission, and because, after the reception of it, he accomplished what it enjoined, with a fault-worthy temper, and in a spirit the

* Heb.

very opposite to that which it required, that he brought reprobation upon both himself and his services. In the nature and cause of his failure, therefore, an obvious implication is made of the authority which he had to officiate at the altar. Here, consequently, are the father and his two sons,—all the males whom inspiration records to have been then in existence,—who were all invested with the prerogatives of the priesthood, and equally entitled to call them into exercise.

We are hence borne to the conclusion that, in the first ages of the world, every male individual was divinely authorized to act as his own priest. Nor is the inference invalidated by supposing, that there could not have been separate and independent calls to the altar given to all the men who successively sprang into being. Nothing of this description was required. It was enough that the language in which the office was first instituted, made no specific selection of persons, appointed no exclusive order of men, and either overtly or silently left all to perform its duties, as a part of their obedience to God. If it connected, as it most probably did, the act of looking forward to the promised Saviour, through the medium of a sacrificial victim, with the act of furnishing the victim itself, of slaying it, and of erecting it into the sensible instrumentality by which the mind was to be suitably and savingly directed, the authority for an individual assumption of the priesthood was sufficiently explicit, and the power of any class of men, in subsequent ages, to monopolize and confine it to themselves, must have been conceded them purely by the consent, or the voluntary choice of the communities who acknowledged them as their spiritual leaders.

It was in this way, we apprehend, that, towards the close of the antideluvian age, and during several generations which succeeded it, the office was filled only by the

heads of families. 'And Noah builded an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar, and the Lord smelled a sweet savor.*' 'And it was so when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job made atonement for them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.†' From the perpetuity with which the latter of these patriarchs is thus recorded to have officiated specifically for each of his sons, there seems reason to conclude, that all the duties of the priesthood, in as far as his own family were concerned with them, devolved entirely upon him, and that they were never performed by themselves. This could not have arisen from the right of individuality having been subverted, since seven associated men are recorded, in the same narrative, to have acted each in a sacrificial way for himself, and altogether independently of his companions‡. The change must, therefore, have originated in a concession made by the sons of Job, that while they stood by and derived all the advantages of his ministrations, it was becoming that their sire should act representatively as their priest. The consent which they made was, perhaps, tacit; but it was, nevertheless, perfectly effective. They had found him, on the development of their reason, ministering on their behalf; and, on their arriving at maturity, it did not occur to them, while they continued under his roof, and enjoyed, in his sacred services, a typical exhibition of the great object of faith, severally to assume the priesthood in an individual capacity. It was not, consequently, till children left their paternal homes, and became the heads of families

* Gen. viii. 20, 21. † Job, i. 5. ‡ Job xlii. 7—9.

in their turn, that they personally entered upon sacrificial performances. Ever previous to this, a right which was common to all the males of the household, was vested, by their own suffrages, exclusively in its head.

Nor was there any thing wrong in such a limitation. The same thing which justified an universal priesthood among males, made the restriction of it, in any case in which it was done with the concurrence of interested parties, an unimpeachable procedure. The appointment respecting the person of the priest was undefined. While it excluded none, it neither commanded all personally to officiate, nor prohibited a confinement of the officiation to any individual, who might be expressly or subintelligently chosen to act in a representative capacity. Its simple object was to furnish the most accessible instrumentality of which the existing circumstances of men would admit, of placing prefiguratively before them, the work of the future Saviour,—an object which was better accomplished, amid the altered circumstances both moral and political of the patriarchal age, by representative than it could have been by individual ministrations.

Had not many a parent, in the days when idolatry was acquiring an ascendancy in the earth, brought the typical symbols of an atonement before the minds of his children, the profligacy, the indifference to religion, or the tendency to heathenism which characterized them, might have prevented their attention from ever being directed to the scheme of redemption, thoroughly indisposing them from offering a sacrifice themselves, and concealing from their view the only means of grace which could then be enjoyed.

But when custom, by the universality with which it patronized the procedure, came to demand of every leader of a household that he should steadily officiate in its name, there was a standing means of grace erected for all; and, from the pointed way in which it had respect to each in-

dividual resident in the house, there was a likelihood that the most wicked of his offspring, recognizing the intimate concern they had with it, and seeing it continually pressing itself upon their notice, might ultimately be brought to a saving reflection on its great design. The altar had, in this way, a publicity and a prominence given to it when it stood in the centre of the family hall, which could not have been possessed by it, had it been shut up in the private chambers of the mansion; and, with such an elevation and conspicuousness of situation, it exerted a higher and more effective influence upon the irreligious part of a community.

Still, however, the custom was altogether arbitrary, and could make an authoritative or preventive interference with neither the right of individuality when any chose to act upon it, nor with any proposal which might be made for restricting the priesthood within still narrower bounds. A farther restriction was accordingly produced by that which was already in existence.

The members of a household, when the children did not, after marriage, wander away from it, and constitute another for themselves, soon swelled into a multitude, and, by settling down in successive groups in the vicinity of the paternal roof, formed the fetus of one of the states or kingdoms of antiquity. During the progress of the multiplication, the sire of the whole, who, in that age when men had still a comparatively great longevity, lived to see the rise of three or four generations, was constantly regarded as the head of the community, and by a common consent, was allowed by them to act not merely as their civil ruler, but also as their minister at the altar. In the earlier increases of his household, he governed entirely as a father; but when it had expanded to a considerable extent, and no longer possessed the character of what is properly domestic, either himself or his first-born

son who succeeded him in the patriarchate, gradually merged into the situation of a prince. The same acquiescence which permitted him to ascend the progressive civil elevation, looked with complacency upon his carrying along with him the right of conducting, for the whole of the infant state, the services of the sanctuary. The progress from a patriarchal to a princely priesthood was thus both imperceptible and natural.

It was hence that before many centuries had passed away under that species of sacerdotal performance which was accomplished by the heads of families, there was introduced the other species whose right was vested in civil rulers. It was, we apprehend, an exemplification of this in the person of Melchizedek, which has so frequently puzzled commentators in forming an estimate of his character. It has been thought a difficulty to reconcile the special sacredness of his priesthood, with the secularity of his situation and pursuits as a king. The union of these two elements, however, was universal till the giving of the law from Sinai. It was necessarily found both in every insulated sacrificer, who, while he at given seasons offered up sacrifices, had in general to attend to the duties of his secular calling, and in the representative priest of a family, who, along with his cares for the spiritual well-being of his children, was bound to look after their temporal interests;—and it is but the extension of it which we find in the conjunct discharge of the sacerdotal and the regal functions.

There was nothing essentially different in the extended priesthood of a prince, and the limited one of a patriarch. There was only, in the one case, an enlargement of the field, and a multiplication of the materials, which were possessed in the other. Until, therefore, a new communication was given from God, differing from that in which the priestly office was instituted immediately after the

fall, and selecting and consecrating a prescribed class of men for the exclusive purpose of filling it, there was in some measure a necessity, founded on the spirit of the existing law, for its being held by persons whose situation was partially of a secular description. It was, consequently, in perfect unison with the nature of the priesthood under the patriarchal economy, and far from being a violation of its sanctity, that its duties, after having been for a season gone through, first by single-handed individuals, and then by the leaders of households, came ultimately to be performed for entire political communities by their supreme magistrate.

Melchizedek was perhaps the first, or at least was amongst the first, who acted as priest in this enlarged capacity. He was not, however, the only one, or merely one of a few, who combined this character with civil rulership. The custom appears to have been almost universal during the whole period which elapsed between his lifetime and the legislation from Horeb. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, evidently appears, from the many flocks which he possessed, and from the high place and influence which he had in the land in which he dwelt, to have been its political governor; and yet, irrespective of all this, he is expressly affirmed to have been 'the priest of Midian,' and to have offered, even in the presence of all the elders of Israel, burnt-offerings and sacrifices to God.* Moses himself, who was the political leader of a great and numerous people, whose mind must have been burdened and comparatively secularized by the manifold anxieties which the care of them produced, and who seems to have had enough in his purely civil connexion with them to exhaust all his attention and energies, is recorded, previous to the call and consecration of his brother,

* Exod. xviii. 1—12.

to have been, at the same time that he was governor, invested with sacerdotal authority, and is declared to have exercised it representatively for the whole of the Israelites, during the period of the Sinaitic transaction.*

In addition to him and Jethro, there is evidence, in the religious customs of the contemporary and subsequent heathens, as portrayed by their own authors, that rulers in general, if not universally, not only united a sacred with a secular officiation, but chose to be known and spoken of by their sacerdotal, in preference to their magisterial character. 'After Agamemnon was constituted the head of the Grecian army, we find him every where in the public services performing the priest's office, and the other Grecian kings and heroes bearing their parts under him in the administration. And when Nestor made a sacrifice to Minerva, Stratius and the noble Echephron led the bull to the altar, Aretus brought the water and canisters of corn, Perseus brought the vessel to receive the blood, Thrasymedes, son of Nestor, knocked down the ox, but Nestor himself acted as a priest, and performed the rest of the ceremony. Among the Lacedemonians, whenever they went to battle, the king always performed the sacrifice; and, in the army, his chief business was to have the supreme command of his forces, and to be their priest in the prophecies of religion. In the time of the heroes, the custom was, for one and the same person to be general of the forces, judge, and high-priest, according to that known verse of Virgil,

'Rex Anius, rex idem hominum, Phœbique sacerdos,

Royal Anius was both king of men, and priest of Apollo.'†

'On this verse, Servius remarks, 'It was the custom of the ancients, for a king to be also a priest or high-priest,

* Exod. xxiv. 1—8. † Stackhouse's His., vol. ii. p. 70—74.

—whence we in the present day call emperors high-priests.' The same commentator on another passage of Virgil,—Dost thou watch thou offspring of the gods, Æneas? Watch,—says, 'This is the language of religion; for the vestal virgins, on a certain day, used to go to the king of the sacred ceremonies and say, Dost thou watch king? Watch, which Virgil justly attributes to Æneas, as being a king, and always introduced by him as sustaining the pontifical character, and skilled in religious rites.'*

These testimonies are sufficiently explicit. And while they shew us what universally prevailed among pagan nations, and leave us to assume upon other testimony equally unexceptionable, that all the religious rites of the heathens were but corruptions of what were practised by the worshippers of the true God, under the patriarchal dispensation; they unite with the facts respecting Jethro and Moses,—the latter of whom at least acted pontifically with the divine sanction and complacency,—in furnishing conclusive evidence, that a regal priesthood came to supplant the simple and more humble forms of it which had previously existed, and that the supplantation was perfectly in harmony with what had been revealed of the divine will, and hence secured the approbation of God.

The successive ways in which the priestly office was thus filled,—rising from personal sacrificers to royal representatives,—originated solely, as we have seen, in the undefined manner in which it had been instituted, and in the utter silence of the divine communication which erected it, respecting any definite class of men by whom it should be occupied. It had hitherto been open to all; the duties of it were divinely accepted of any who performed them in the exercise of faith; and no collision was made with

* Outram de Sacrif. i. 5. sec. 3.

the spirit of its institution when common consent monopolized it representatively to the head of a community.

At the giving of the law in the wilderness, however, a totally different order of it was appointed, and many of the preceding laws respecting it were annulled. The priesthood which was then established was entirely opposed, in its bearing upon the persons who were eligible for holding it, to that which had hitherto existed, and made the law regarding them as defined and scrupulous as it had formerly been loose and universal. It vested itself exclusively in Aaron and his posterity, prescribed a variety of civil and corporeal qualifications which were required of them before they could assume it, and gave a multitude of directions for the proper management of its affairs. The many maledictions with which it hedged round its right of peculiarity, rendered an intrusion upon it by any who were not pure and of the Aaronic family, a sin of the most offensive and aggravated nature. None dared to enter upon it but those whom, in the most explicit manner, it acknowledged; and these it required to abandon every secular avocation, and to devote themselves entirely to the work of the sanctuary. It enjoined upon them, as a pre-requisite of their being entrusted with the discharge of its functions, that they should be inaugurated with solemn and imposing ceremonies, demanded that its duties should be invariably performed by them while they were clothed with a species of garment and embroidery peculiar to itself, and, during the whole period of their ministration, watched, with the most anxious care, over both their moral character, and the manner in which they conducted their official procedure.

There was raised, as the scene of its operations, a spacious and magnificent erection, portioned out into various apartments, furnished with a multitude of singular utensils, and so religiously consecrated to its purposes as to

make the remotest secularizing of it an act of most grievous sacrilege; and beyond the precincts of this edifice, or in any other way within its walls than what was expressly commanded, it reckoned an attempt at sacerdotal ministration, a highly punishable outrage upon its sacredness. The services which it required, were of the most complex, and expensive description, and were legislated in a multi-form, minute, and detailing ritual, which, while it enjoined all the varieties of sacrifices and ablutions, and described the many ceremonies with which they were to be accompanied, proscribed every species of offering, and every method of presenting it, but what had the sanction of its authority. The whole Aaronic priesthood, in regard to its officiates, its sanctuary, and its services, was thus an immensely stupendous machinery, formed by a manifold involution of wheels within wheels, built with a skill which made it a paragon of exquisite workmanship, and possessing a thorough harmony in the movements and co-operation of its parts.

The reason of its being so exceedingly complex in its structure, and so scrupulous and elective in the choice and qualifications of its officiates, lay in its being designed, as nearly as possible, and in as far as a nice combination of figures can be made to represent a great and glorious spiritual object, to furnish a perfect typical exhibition of the mediatorial character of Christ, and of the various materials and results of his sacrificial and intercessory work. The adumbrations of these which had hitherto been made in the loose and general priesthood of the antediluvian and patriarchal age, were totally inadequate; and, although they roughly figured out the grand features of atonement, they fell far short of giving a full-length portraiture of its nature, and of properly shewing forth the different and successive aspects which it wears in reference to its objects. They taught, it is true, that a

sacrifice for sin behoved to be offered, that it would be presented by the Saviour, and that, in order to its efficacy, it would involve the sanguinary oblation of the victim; but they contained nothing which could directly suggest to the mind the doctrine of imputation by the transmission of moral amenability,—which could significantly point out the way in which the results of an expiation are transferred to the sinner in a justifying act,—which could bring home the exhilarating fact, or rightly describe the nature of the near fellowship with God which accrues from piacular remission,—which could, in any shape whatever, detail the process of intercession that commenced with the presentation of the Redeemer's sacrifice in the heavenly sanctuary,—or which could tend to illustrate the moral grandeur of God's justice and love, as they display themselves in the cross of Christ. These are things of momentous importance; and yet they were almost, if not altogether, overlooked by the slender types of the patriarchal economy.

There was, besides, during that dispensation, no proper prefiguration of the priestly character which our Lord sustained. The fact of his priesthood was plainly enough taught; but no exhibition was made of the peculiar properties of his person as the priest of his people. There was nothing to symbolize the spotlessness of his purity, the perfection of his obedience, the power which he possessed over his own life, and the spirituality and entire contrastedness to worldly principles of acting, with which he performed the whole of his work. The prefiguration of these was prevented by the universal eligibility of men to minister at the altar, and by the necessity there was for officiates to mingle with mankind in the prosecution of secular undertakings. And yet what, but the fact of expiation itself, could more directly concern the development of the scheme of redemption? The doctrine of

Christ's person is interwoven with all the truths of the gospel, and lies at the foundation of correct views of his mediatorial work. The symbolical revelation of it, therefore, was worthy of a prominent place in an economy preparatory and introductory to the christian dispensation.

In the priesthood, then, which was first established in the world, there were many serious deficiencies; and it was with the design of supplying them, that this was divinely supplanted by another, vastly more extensive in the range of its services, and much more eminently fitted to accomplish, in a typical way, the purposes of its institution. Nor was there in this any reflection of disgrace upon the ministrations of the previous economy: there was merely a carrying of them up to a higher and more significant elevation. Both priesthoods were of divine appointment; and they equally well filled the places which they were respectively destined to occupy in the history of God's revelation of his will.

It pleased the Divine Being, instead of developing the plan of salvation at once, by a sudden bursting of it forth in the blaze and splendour of a mid-day manifestation, to make it known by a gradual process of discovery, and pouring only a few rays of it at first over the horizon, to brighten it progressively up in a growing twilight, and to reserve its perfect display till the actual rising of the sun of righteousness. The stream of gospel knowledge was only a meagre rivulet at its origin; and, while it had sufficient water to refresh the drooping spirits of men in the earliest stages of its progress, it was not till it had run through successive centuries, and had acquired magnitude and majesty from the thousand tributaries which met it in its course, that effectual power was given it to fertilize and fructify the world, and to roll its alluvial waves upon every desert of the earth. 'And when the man that had the line went forth eastward, he measured

a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ancles. Again he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. And again he measured a thousand and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand, and it was a river which I could not pass over, for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.* There were thus three increased depths arrived at during the lapse of three successive milleniums, before that four-thousandth year came round in which the river of revelation obtained, in the actual mission of Christ, the full perfection of its size, and entirely outpeered all its former dimensions. Every new millenium poured fresh accessions into it, which increased in the inverse ratio of the distance over which it had run, and imparted a depth and a breadth to it in which its former waters were entirely engulphed.

Now it was just such an accession which constituted the erection of the Aaronic priesthood;—and just as waters of knee-depth swallowed up those which reached only to the ancles, and henceforth gave the river a magnitude that completely changed its previous character, and no longer permitted a puny stream to occupy the channel; so did the priesthood of Aaron effect a perfect eclipse of the priesthood which went before it, and, while it immeasurably surpassed it in its display of the person and work of Christ, prevented it from ever again being seen in the performance of sacrificial rites, and from holding a moment's additional place in the history of the church. It neither reprobated nor rejected the materials of which it was composed, but amalgamated them with the new ingredients which it brought to the service of the sanctuary;

* Ezek. xlvii. 3—5.

yet it never suffered them to be again decomposed, and ordained that they should not henceforth exist in a detached state with impunity. The Aaronic priesthood, therefore, from the period of its institution, till the personal appearance of Christ, was exclusively recognized as the typical prefigurator of his work.

CHAP. II.

THE GENERAL NATURE OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD.

A mediation, when complete, includes performances which are directed to both of two parties. It supposes an alienation to have taken place between them, and has the destruction of it for its object. A variety of ways may be supposed in which a necessity for its interference may have originated; and according to the nature of this, will be the peculiar description of its services. If the parties have both been guilty of offence, they must both be reasoned with respecting their blame-worthiness, and equally required to make concessions and reparation; but if, on the other hand, only one of them, and he the other's inferior, have been the transgressor, and if, along with his breach of the laws of friendship, he have violated precepts which he was bound, as his superior's subject or servant, to obey, the mediation must be all authoritative on the one side and supplicatory on the other, and, while it addresses itself to the offender in the language of nothing but exhortation or reproach, must direct efforts of unqualified advocacy on his behalf towards his sovereign or master. In either case, the mediatorial functions must have an immediate reference to them both. For although there cannot, in the latter case as in the former, be a trans-

mission, for the sinner's consideration and voluntary acceptance or refusal, of any conditional terms of agreement, and although he must submit to be dealt with entirely at the pleasure of his injured superior, and must be ready, either personally, or by a substitute, to make every amends which is stipulated; there yet require to be brought before his mind the intimations of his master's will, and to be employed every necessary means for effecting any changes upon his circumstances and character, which are demanded as the concomitants of his restoral to favor. The chief business of the mediation is an advocacy on his behalf with his offended lord; yet, in a number of ways, it must, at the same time, address its ministrations to himself. And it is a mediation similar to this which has been undertaken between God and men.

At man's creation, he stood on terms of perfect friendship with the Divine Being, and possessed all the advantages and enjoyments of a close fellowship with God. The Deity was not obliged to confer upon him a higher nature or more expanded capacities than he chose; and when he actually invested him with moral and intellectual faculties of an exalted kind, and conferred upon him a sufficiency of material on which they might, in a way of lofty happiness, continually expatiate, the dispensation had its origin entirely in divine sovereignty, and added to his moral responsibility as a subject, the obligations to gratitude and devotedness which belong to a favorite. When, therefore, the sin of apostacy was committed, man was disempowered, both by his legal condemnation as a guilty moral agent, and by the outrage which he had perpetrated upon the condescensions of an altogether unmerited and gracious communion with him by a superior, from submitting overtures to God, and was placed in a situation of such unmeasured guilt, as would have made

so much as an attempt at reconciliation, a thing, on his part, wholly preposterous. He was solely at the disposal of God, and knew, by the dictates of his own conscience, that he deserved unmingled and eternal manifestations of his wrath. Hence, if he were ever to be restored to his favor, the only agency by which the restoration could be effected was mediatorial interference; and this required both to be appointed by the Deity himself, and, in as far as it addressed itself to him, to consist entirely of a process of meritorious pleading. It could have no other reference to man, than what went on the assumption of his utter guilt and moral worthlessness; nor could it otherwise direct its services to him, than by informing him of the divine will respecting his salvation, explaining to him the nature of its own performances, destroying his personal defilement, and restoring him to acquiescence in the mind and service of Jehovah.

A mediation between God and man thus consists of two parts. It addresses itself, in a way of instruction, authority, and moral renovation, to the sinner on the one hand; and, on the other, makes reparation to the Deity for the injury he has done him, and intercedes with him on his behalf. In respect to the latter service, it embodies the doings of a priesthood; and, in regard to the former, it includes the duties of a prophet and a king. As a prophet, Christ instructs man in the divine will concerning the method of salvation, makes him a possessor of faith in the gospel, and brings him to the acknowledgement of the truth; and, as a king, he carries forward, by the subjugation of his remaining corruptions, and the increasing establishment within him of a rule of righteousness and peace, the work of sanctification which was begun in the regeneration of his heart. And just as, in the combined discharge of what belongs to these two offices, he renovates human character, and

accomplishes all the ends of a mediation which terminate upon man ; so, in performing the duties of the priesthood, does he fulfil all those designs of it which terminate upon God. The prophet and the king communicate needful information to the sinner, and produce those changes in his nature which fit him for a personal and complete enjoyment of the divine favor in the future world ; and the priest meanwhile has constructed, and, by perpetual pleadings with the Deity, continually keeps open, the channel through which this favor is conveyed. The one office plies itself with the same exclusiveness for the doing away of the offended Creator's judicial anger, as the other two exert themselves, in a conjunct and co-operative capacity, for investing the offending creature with the different features of personal character, which the subsession of vindictive indignation demands. A priesthood, therefore, occupying the place which it does in a system of mediation between a guilty transgressor and his righteously incensed lawgiver, may be defined, ' An advocacy with God for men.'

That this definition is correct may be shewn from a variety of considerations. It is of importance that a few of these be advanced, in order both to afford a suitable introduction to a scriptural view of the sacerdotal office, and to overthrow the foundation on which the false and ruinous conceptions of it entertained by Socinians, have been made to rest. They cannot deny the fact that our Lord is frequently called a priest in the word of God ; yet, assuming the epithet to be strictly metaphorical, they regard it as applicable to him merely on account of some distant resemblances between what he did for mankind, and what was done for the Jewish people by their High Priest. The salvation which, as a priest, he accomplishes, they view as consisting in merely the republica-

tion of a system of morality, the confirmation of it by his death, and an exhibition to the minds of men of appropriate motives to a compliance with its precepts. This, along with a power which they believe him, since his ascension to heaven, to exert for giving help and deliverance to men in their struggles with danger and difficulty, and the reception of which from God in answer to prayer, forms, in their estimation, the reason of his being called an intercessor, is all which they suppose, or will admit, to be included in his priesthood. Their view of it therefore, stands in direct opposition to ours, and makes man to be the sole object on which it terminates. They thoroughly reject the idea of its being an advocacy with the Divine Being, and hold it to take precisely the same direction, in the discharge of its functions, as the other two offices, and to be, in many respects, only another name by which the nature of them is figuratively described.

This is the essence of Socinianism in its doctrines of atonement and intercession, and constitutes the grand basis on which all its practical heresies are erected. It is hence of momentous importance, and will involve a general and fundamental subversion of the whole system, to prove by the adduction of a few apposite arguments, that in no shape whatever does the Saviour's priesthood address itself to men, and that, while it has been instituted and exists purely for the promotion of their moral well-being, its ministrations are all conducted with God immediately and exclusively for their object. When this point has been established, the true nature of a priesthood will be discovered, and the fallaciousness of all the Socinian doctrines respecting it virtually exposed. Proofs of it might be found in a great variety of considerations. A mere selection of these, however, is sufficient for our purpose. And, *in the first place*, we remark that

I. The priesthood of Aaron and his successors is frequently affirmed in the divine word to have had respect directly to the Deity. 'And take unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may *minister unto me* in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.* 'But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priest's which *minister unto the Lord* are the sons of Aaron; and the Levites wait upon their business; and they *burn unto the Lord* every morning and every evening burnt-offerings and sweet incense.† 'But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they *shall come near to me to minister unto me*, and they shall stand before me *to offer unto me* the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God: they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, *to minister unto me*, and they shall keep my charge.‡

Nothing could more plainly declare an immediate dealing with God than the phraseology employed in these passages; and yet it is the current language of the scriptures respecting all who served at the altar. Not only is their service described as a ministration directed, in the most explicit way, to the Divine Being; but, as a necessary preparation for entering upon its performance, it was required that they should be separated from the world in its secular pursuits, and so strictly consecrated to him as to become, in the most special manner, his servants. And lest we should imagine that their consecration, like that of prophets and apostles, was merely a dedication of them to the work of declaring the will of God to men, and of acting as his messengers in carrying into execution any of

* Exod. xxviii. 1. † 2 Chron. xiii. 10, 11. ‡ Ezek. xli. 15, 16.

his purposes toward the Israelites, they are affirmed to have received it with the pointed design of their '*standing before the Lord*,'—of their remaining in an attitude and situation which are quite incompatible with the idea of their going forth with messages to their countrymen,—and with the design also of their offering the fat and the blood of sacrificial victims, and burning sweet incense and burnt-offerings every morning and every evening, not in any metaphorical manner to themselves, their fellow-men, or any inanimate object around them, but, in a literal and absolute way, exclusively *to God*. The carrying forward of a ministration of this kind is averred to have been identical with sustaining the character and performing the work of one who fills the priest's office. Just, therefore, as the children of Israel went astray from God, when they ceased to look up to him as the object of worship, and began to make their supplications to the false gods of the heathen; the sons of Zadok remained faithful to his charge, and continued to act in harmony with what was required of them as priests, when in the midst of the defection, they abode still in the sanctuary, and presented to him the sacrifices which he had prescribed. Their priesthood as manifestly consisted in making him the object of their ministrations, as the people's idolatry did in addressing their cry to the pagan deities; and had they either left the altar and spent their time in addresses to men, or, while they continued to serve at it, turned away their thoughts from the Divine Being, during the consumption of their sacrifices, they would have as completely abandoned their sacerdotal duties, as the apostates did the creed of a pure theism, and the worship of the true God, when they withdrew their thoughts from him in prayer, and fixed them upon idols. It is for this reason, we apprehend, that

2. The same language which is employed to describe

prayer, is often applied to their official actings. An instance of this, in the phrase, 'they shall come near to me,' is found in a passage which has been already quoted;* and, in a still more striking manner, it occurs in another place where it not only designates sacerdotal services in the abstract, but is descriptive of the Lord's distinguishment of them, from those of men who wished to enter surreptitiously into the sacred office. 'And he spake unto Korah and all his company saying, Even to-morrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy, and will cause him *to come near unto him*, even him whom he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him.'† Nor is it less plainly applied to prayer, than it is thus employed in describing the nature of a priesthood. 'Let my cry *come near before thee*, O Lord; give me understanding according to thy word.'‡ 'Wherefore the Lord said, This people *draw near me* with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from me.'§

A variety of other terms, expressive of moral approach, of withdrawment from the world, and of coming before the Deity, are, in the same way, used in reference to both subjects; and, in order to shew the strict parallelism which the employment of them establishes between the two cases, only a few texts require to be quoted. 'And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth unto thee good. Then said the priest, *let us draw near* hither unto God.'|| 'Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, *let us draw near* with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having

* Exek. xliv. 15. † Lev. xvi. 2. ‡ Psal. cxix. 162.

§ Isa. xxix. 13. || 1 Sam. xiv. 36.

our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*—‘And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish *let him not approach* to offer the bread of his God.† ‘And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them, and I will cause him to draw near, and *he shall approach unto me*; for who is this that engageth his heart *to approach unto me*? saith the Lord.‡—‘At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, *to stand before the Lord* to minister unto him unto this day.§ ‘But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold I thought he will surely come out to me and *stand and call on the name of the Lord his God*, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.’||

Here, then, we have the phrases ‘coming near to God,’ ‘drawing near to God,’ ‘approaching to God,’ and ‘standing before God,’ successively employed to denote both a sacerdotal ministration, and a common act of prayer, and applied to each with the same latitude and clearness. Now there is no imaginable way in which this can be accounted for, but by assuming such a sameness to be in the actions, in regard to the immediate respect which they have to the Supreme Being, as fully warrants their being spoken of by the same general appellations. They are alike inclusive of a moral recession and exclusion, for a period, from the world, and of a moral advancing to the Deity, and a directing to him of the attention of the mind and the advocacy of the heart. The one would, on this account, be as completely destroyed as the other, were any thing in creation to supplant him as the object on

* Heb. x. 19—22. † Lev. xxi, 16, 13. ‡ Jer. xxx. 21.

§ Deut. x. 8,

|| 2 Kings v. 11.

which it terminates. Prayer would be no longer an approach to God, but an utter abandonment of his service, were it to be addressed to a human or any other created being. In the offering of it up, the individual would then destroy it as an act of 'drawing near to him,' and would pervert it into the aggravated sin of idolatry. A priesthood, upon the same principle, would, with equal certainty, cease to sustain its native and fundamental character of 'a coming before God,' if, instead of directing its services to him, it permitted all thoughts of him to be forgotten, and erected itself into an instrument of acting immediately with man. There would then be an express coming away from him, a direct approaching to our race, and a consequent complete reversion of the principles established for its procedure in a system of mediation.

3. The thanksgivings and adorations which believers present to the Deity, are called 'sacrifices,' while they themselves, in an amplification of the same figure, are frequently denominated 'priests.' 'To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* 'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.† 'By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.‡

It is evident that there could be neither truth nor propriety in this metaphor, but every thing in it which is calculated to mislead the judgment, if it be denied that the official actings of the Levites had respect to any thing

* 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

† Rev. i, 5, 6.

‡ Heb. xiii. 15.

but the Divine Being. The essence of it consists in comparing the praises which enter into the worship of God, with the sacrificial rites of the tabernacle and the temple, and in a consequent imposition, in a figurative way, upon the offerer of the one, of the name which literally belongs to the minister of the other. Now it is plain that this, to say the least of it, would be absolutely unmeaning, if there were not grand leading features of resemblance between the things which are compared. Yet where are these features to be found, if it be not assumed that both are directed toward the same object? There is not only a total absence of similarity, but there is a perfect contrariety between a message coming forth from God to men, and one going up from men to God,—a contrariety which affects their intrinsic nature, invests the persons who officially carry them with a total difference of character, and renders it impossible to set the one over against the other for mutual illustration. When it is seen, therefore, that the ransomed are called priests in consequence of their addressing adorations to the Deity, and that their figurative priesthood would be destroyed if they presented their 'spiritual sacrifices' to any other; the inference is inevitable that there was an equally explicit respect had to him in the literal sacrifices of the Jewish dispensation. It is, besides, well known that

4. Many of the Aaronic presentations were themselves of a votive or eucharistical description. And this is a fact which, in its furnishing instances of sacerdotal offerings that could not, by the acknowledgment of all parties, have any creature for their object, affords resistless evidence of the termination of a priesthood's whole procedure upon Jehovah. 'And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace-offerings which *he shall offer unto the Lord*. If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mingled with oil. But

if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice.* Lest we should hesitate respecting the manner in which either species of offering was presented, or entertain a doubt regarding its properties and nature, an explanation of both is given in the scriptures. 'O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. *I will offer unto thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.*'† 'Thy vows are upon me, O God. *I will render praises unto thee; for thou hast delivered my soul from death.*'‡

We have here plain instances of at least two kinds of priestly services, which, in harmony with the description given of them in the divine word, could be conducted only with a single-eyed reference to the Deity; and while we are assured that the performance of them was an integral part of the duties of the sacerdotal office, and that nowhere are they affirmed to have been different, in their objective bearings, from its other ministrations, we are fully borne out in viewing the account which inspiration gives of them as descriptive of its general and fundamental character. Between votive and eucharistical offerings, on the one hand, and sin and burnt and trespass offerings, on the other, no distinction, with respect to their object, is made in the scriptures; but all, on the contrary, are equally denominated sacrifices, and are alike averred to have been a 'ministration to the Lord.' Had he, therefore, not been regarded as the centre around which they all exclusively revolved, they would immediately have dropped from the orbit of a priesthood, and fallen into ruin. This must necessarily have been true of those which were expressive of vowing and thanksgiving; and, upon every fair principle,

* Lev. vii. 11, 12, 16. † Ps. cxvi. 16, 17. ‡ Ps. lvi. 1

of reasoning, it must be assumed as equally true in reference to the rest.

An enlarged view of the design for which they were appointed compels us to regard them as having been, in fact, the medium or the symbolical materials of divine worship under the Old Testament dispensation. Without even assuming that they were divinely instituted types of the expiatory sacrifice of the Redeemer, it is obvious, from the highly figurative ordinances which were erected by God as the reservoirs of religion among the Jews, that acts of worship themselves must have been in unison with the metaphorical spirit of the economy. The dispositions which were essential to their rectitude and acceptableness must, it is true, have been the same as are required in a state of things where divine ordinances are more simple and spiritual; but where the entire establishment was made up of cumbrous and multiform ceremonies, the matter of them must of necessity have been carnal. And when we look around amongst the Jewish rites to discover them, we not only are unable to perceive any thing else than the sacrifices in which they could have consisted, but have positive proof laid before our minds, that these were the regular and the only medium of divine homage. Not only was the presentation of them frequently, if not always, when rightly done, accompanied with prayer,—a fact which itself sufficiently identifies them with the material of acceptable worship; but no supplications were, in any situation, legitimately offered up without an express reference to their existence, and the great seasons of national and special approach to God were those in which, when multitudes had assembled from all parts of the country, the most eminent of them,—and these not wholly of an eucharistical, but chiefly of a peculiar description,—were presented in a celebration of the feasts. They were recognized as the only means of supplicating

divine favor, as well as the medium of thankfully acknowledging the mercies which had been actually bestowed. If, therefore, worship was thus a leading ingredient in them as a whole, it is inconceivable how, in offering them up, the priests should not, when acting in consistency with the spirit of their office, have had their eyes and their hearts turned solely to the Deity. That this was the case, however, we argue still farther from,

5. The character of the place in which sacerdotal services were conducted. This, until the days of Solomon, was the Tabernacle which, in obedience to the divine command, and in scrupulous conformity to the pattern of it shewn him in the Mount, was erected by Moses in the wilderness. It was reared with the intention of affording an appropriate emblem of the Church of Christ, in which God condescends to manifest his moral and gracious presence, and is 'worshipped in spirit and in truth;' and all its complicated furniture and multitude of utensils, were formed and arranged in harmony with this design. In virtue of a dedication of it to his service, and a consecration of it by himself, it became so strictly sacred as to make the performance within its precincts of any common work, or the employment of any of its instruments of service for a secular purpose, a heinously sacrilegious act. 'And there will I meet with the children of Israel, and the Tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory; and I will sanctify the Tabernacle of the congregation and the altar.*' 'Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my Tabernacle that is among them.†' Its grand distinguishing feature was the continual residence within it of the Shechinah, or the cloud of glory which symbolized the divine presence. In consequence of

* Exod. xxix. 43, 44.

† Lev. xv. 31.

this, it was held to be exclusively the property of God, the chosen scene of his gracious manifestations of himself, the special seat of his worship, and the only arena of sacerdotal ministration. 'Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle; and the cloud of the Lord was upon the Tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.* To depart from it in any acts of homage, to erect any competition building for the divine service, or to offer up the appointed sacrifices in any other place, was a procedure highly criminal in itself, and punished in some instances where men were guilty of it, with the infliction of judicial death. 'And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.† Since, therefore, the sacredness of the Tabernacle was walled round by such practical maledictions, against either a profanation of it by secular actions, or a disrespect of it by conducting the worship of God beyond its courts; it is evident that no performance which had any thing created for its object could be tolerated within it, and that all the ministrations of which it was the scene had an immediate concern with the Deity. These, without a solitary exception, were conducted by the priests; and, if they had not been entirely addressed to God, the purpose of its erection would have been completely defeated. It was purely on account of its being his only

* Exod. xl. 34. 38.

† Numb. xvi. 26. 29. 32.

manifestative residence on earth, that it became the single place in which they could, in harmony with the divine mind, be carried on, and that the performance of them in any other was accounted an act of such enormous guilt. This,—while we reflect that if they had been addressed to men either in an announcement of the will of God or in a dealing with them in a way of deliverance, they would, with more propriety, have been conducted in the assemblies of the people and without restriction to any precise edifice or spot,—makes the assumption of their having been always directed to the symbolic cloud altogether indispensable. And this assumption is corroborated by many express testimonies to the fact that, in the acts of sacrificing, and especially in those which were performed by the High Priest, the attention of the officiate, and the faces of the multitude, who, meanwhile worshipped without, were turned to the apartment which the Shechinah had chosen for its immediate abode.

When, in compliance with the divine will, the Tabernacle was thrown down, and the Temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem appointed to supplant it, there was thrown around it the same distinguishing peculiarity which had characterized its predecessor. In this also, till the period of the Babylonish captivity, the cloud of God's presence rested; and, on account of this, he often speaks of it in his word as the house in which he dwelt, the place where he had put his name, and his house of prayer. None but the priests were permitted to enter those apartments of it which constituted the sanctuary, and not even they, with the exception of the High Priest, and that only once in every year, were allowed to appear in the Holiest of all, or the room in which the glory of the divine presence was immediately displayed. It was reckoned so peculiarly the scene of God's presence, that, while no sacrifices could be offered up with impunity in any other part of

the land, and no special festival celebrated but by the whole nation assembling around it, Jews, in all parts of the world to which they had been scattered, were commanded to worship with their faces turned toward it, and to esteem Jerusalem, in consequence it, above their chiefest joy.

All this, and much more of the same description, is totally unintelligible, if it be not conceded that those services which were carried on within its walls were a continual dealing with God. It would be strange beyond measure if all the multitude of worshippers without were bound to address their supplications to the Shechinah which it contained, while the priests, nevertheless, who conducted its special ministrations within, and who acted as the people's representatives, were not invested with the character of advocates on their behalf with the Divinity. All its performances were entirely of a sacerdotal description; and, in order to their agreement with the design and the sacredness of the edifice, they must constantly have had regard to the cloud of glory which it contained as a visible display of the Deity.

This argument we esteem to be itself decisive of the point; and since it has been preceded by a variety of others, we shall, in addition, adduce only another drawn from a consideration of

6. The nature of those ceremonial actions with which the offerings of the priests were accompanied. These were exceedingly numerous and diversified, and were of such a nature that, neither all of them combined, nor many of them apart, could have been practised but with the view of expressing the reference which the attending sacrifices had to God. Such were the waving of several kinds of offerings towards all the points of heaven, indicating the presentation of them to a Being who is every where present, who fills heaven and earth, and whom the

heaven of heavens cannot contain,—the religious devotion of the victims' blood to God, expressive of the lordship which he possesses over his creatures' life, and of the exercise of his prerogative in claiming it, when, in obedience to his authority, they were sacrificed as oblations in his sanctuary,—the adduction of the sheep and goats and bullocks to the altar, the binding of them to its horns, and the consumption of them either totally or partially with the supernaturally produced fire which continually burnt upon it, constituting a solemn consecration of them to him who was its only proprietor,—and the wafting upward of the smoke which rose from the incense of the peace-offerings, recognizive of heaven as the actual locality of his moral presence, and of the right which he possesses to the sweet savor of his people's adorations.

These, and similar rites are too plain to be misunderstood; yet, there was one performed both by the common priests and the high-priest, which far outpeered them in its significancy, and soared high in intimating the heavenward direction of the sacrifices,—that in which the blood of victims was sprinkled toward the mercy-seat or dwelling-place of the Shechinah. In the performance of this, the common priest did not, it is true, enter the Holiest, and minister immediately before the ark,—an action which was restricted to the high-priest; but, with the express recognition in his mind of the spot on which the symbolic cloud rested, he sprinkled the blood toward the vail by which it was separated from the apartment in which he stood. He placed himself directly over against it; and, with his eyes turned to the precise place where it abode, he threw from him, in the direction of it, the sacrificial blood. The high-priest went farther. On the great day of atonement, he penetrated through the vail as a typical entrance, according to apostolic testimony,* into heaven itself, and

* Heb. ix. 24.

sprinkled toward the cloud of glory which was before his eyes, the blood which he had carried along with him. So explicitly had this action respect to God, that inspired history affirms it to have been recognized as such by himself, and narrates that, in virtue of it, he filled the whole house with a brilliant and sensible display of his glory and gracious complacency. Nothing could more pointedly have expressed a ministration to God, nor have been more unmeaning and absolutely preposterous, if it had been designed to be directed to the people. In that case, the officiate, after having slain the victim, ought, instead of carrying its blood into the immediate presence of God, and sprinkling it before him, to have borne it forth to the people, and used it in a way which would have been expressive of the termination of the service upon them. As it was, he went directly up from the multitude, turned his back completely upon them, and, with his face toward God, performed the piacular ceremony. This is evidence indisputable that, acting as he did in a representative capacity, and in the name of the whole Jewish nation, his priesthood was a dealing with the Divine Being on behalf of the people.

We have seen, then, from a variety of considerations,—from the frequency with which the scriptures affirm the Levitical priests to have ministered to God, from the employment of the same language in describing common prayer and their official actings, from the fact that believers, in reference to the praises which they present to the Deity, are metaphorically called ‘priests,’ from the votive and eucharistical character of many of the Aaronic presentations, from the nature of those places in which sacerdotal services were performed, and from the obvious import of the ceremonies with which they were accompanied,—that God was the exclusive object of that priest-

hood's ministrations which existed under the former dispensation. Nor is the evidence which has been elicited, less conclusive in its bearing upon that which the scriptures so often attribute to Christ. All that has been proved respecting the godward direction of the one priesthood, goes equally to establish the godward direction of the other. Throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, a close parallel is instituted between them; and the former is discussed at length by the apostle for the illustration of the latter. Socinians themselves allow that it is in allusion to the Aaronic officiations, and on the ground of a resemblance between them and those of the Redeemer, that he is denominated a priest; and, although they suppose the similarity to consist in actions performed to the Jewish people by their high-priest, and works of instruction and deliverance from enemies accomplished for men by the Saviour, yet, when it is shewn them that the sacred ministrations of the Levites had not, as they imagine, respect to men but God, they must, in terms of their general principle, be prepared to concede, that the same character is impressed upon those of Christ. Termination upon God is seen to have been essential to the priestly services of the old economy,—to have been, in fact, the very stamina of its priesthood; and a property so radical cannot but enter into a comparison which casts the official work of Jesus and Aaron in the same mould, and imposes upon both the same official name.

It is not denied, indeed, that the Jewish high-priests did many things besides those which had a reference to the Deity,—that they frequently acted in a prophetic, and judicial, and sometimes in a gubernatorial capacity; yet all the performances which they went through in sustaining such characters were superinduced, as will afterwards be shewn, upon the priesthood, and formed no part of the native discharge of its functions. They executed them

as men, who, in the absence of other individuals qualified for the work, undertook to fill another office besides the one which was properly their own; and all the while that they either generally or occasionally occupied it, there was an express understanding, on the part both of them and the people, that they accomplished work which was extraneous and additional to their pontifical duties. In all the places of the ritual where their sacerdotal services are defined, they are closely restricted to those which consisted in a ministration to God, and were performed in the sanctuary.

It is, besides, entirely with respect to what was done by them in the Tabernacle or Temple, that the parallel between the Jewish high-priests and Christ is drawn in the scriptures. Throughout the reasonings founded on the comparison, there is no reference whatever to any thing performed by them beyond its precincts. Even, therefore, were the concession made, that things accomplished elsewhere sprang from the exercise of sacerdotal prerogative, not only have we,—what must be conceded us in whatever way the argument can be viewed,—a proof that some at least of the Redeemer's doings terminated upon God, but we have evidence also, that, however services of another kind may be predicated of priestly functions under the Jewish dispensation, they have no official connexion with those which are discharged by Christ. The allusions which Paul makes to the Aaronic ministrations, are, without a single exception, to the immolation of sacrificial victims, the performance of piacular ablutions, the ceremonies with which both were attended, and the appearance of the high-priest before the Shechinah on the day of annual atonement,—things which have all been shewn to have had exclusive concern, in regard to the object of them, with Jehovah. Since, therefore, it is, on all hands, admitted that Christ is called a priest in allusion to the

pontifical services of the former economy, the conclusion is manifest, even upon the principles of Socinians themselves, that his sacerdotal services terminate upon God.

It may, and by them we know it will, be said that the comparison does not prove *an identity* in the actions of the two officiates, that it merely shews them to be *similar*, and that no proof is furnished by it of both being the same in regard to object. It is freely granted that the illustration of one thing by another often implies nothing more than general resemblance, and not unfrequently assumes the likeness to consist but in some secondary quality; yet, in every such instance, there is either no interchange of the names belonging to the things compared; or one of them is understood in merely a figurative sense. An abstract idea is sometimes elucidated by clothing it in language literally applicable to something sensible, and the spirit and leading facts of one man's conduct may be explained by an allegorical narration of the temper and actions of another; but, in either of these cases, or in any other of a similar description, there is nothing analagous to a comparison which places two individuals in the same relative situation, imposes upon them the same descriptive appellations, affirms them to occupy the same office, and exhibits them in the prosecution of the same course of acting. If both be called kings, and if the deeds of each are represented as naturally springing from the exercise of regal prerogative, we must view them as equally possessed of strict royalty; and were a doubt to arise respecting the radical qualities of the one's actions, it would immediately be exploded by an appeal to the known properties of the other's. The same thing holds true when they are called priests, or judges, or prophets, or any thing else which implies general character and defined official procedure. Nor is the case materially altered, when the two officiates are proved to

differ in things of a circumstantial nature. One king may have sprung from a regular dynasty, and another may have been raised to the throne from among the populace,—the one may rule with absolute authority, and the other may usually consult a constitutional cabinet; yet, in spite of such minor discrepancies, both are alike to be viewed as kings, their actions to be regarded as equally regal, and their official conduct to be held as possessed of the same fundamental properties. There is hence no truth in the assertion, that the inspired parallel between Christ and Aaron does not prove *identity*. It gives the name 'priest' to both, employs only one language in speaking of their official characters, sometimes in describing their work speaks of them conjunctly, avers the matter of their services to have equally consisted in 'offering gifts and sacrifices,' and, in every other way, seems to leave no room for a doubt respecting their sameness of general character. The only things in which it admits their priesthoods to differ are circumstantial; and these are so minutely detailed, and are pointed out with such apparent solicitude, as to erect the very disagreement into a proof, that the comparison means to declare every thing besides, and therefore every thing essential, to be strictly the same.

All this is too manifest, not to be at once seen and felt. In order, therefore, to evade it, Socinians avail themselves of the fact that the word 'priest' occurs sometimes in the scriptures in a metaphorical sense, and, on this authority, allege that the priesthood of Christ is merely figurative. With this allegation before them, they set aside all the argument from the Levitical ministrations as pointless, and contend that nothing can be conclusively inferred from it respecting the direction of the Saviour's services.

Even on this ground, however, it can easily be shewn

that their doctrine is untenable, and inconsistent with itself. The only figurative priesthood which the divine word mentions, is either that of the Christian Church, or that of the Israelitish nation viewed as its type; and, in both cases, it has respect to men neither as the object of its ministrations, nor as persons for whom it engages itself in securing blessings. Its services entirely consist of divine worship, and are exclusive of even the presentation of prayer for mercies. The only things which it offers are thanksgivings and adorations; nor can it ever, without involving itself in impiety and abandonment of God, address any of them to a creature. It has hence even less to do with men than a priesthood which is literal. The latter, in refusing to perform any service *to* men, is nevertheless continually employed in acting on their behalf; but the former will not, in the remotest way, act either *for* them or *to* them. It has no concern with them whatever; and is solely occupied in presenting to God 'the sacrifice of praise,' for blessings which its own officiate has received. Such is the only idea of a figurative priesthood which is furnished by the scriptures. In alleging, consequently, that the Redeemer's is of this description, Socinians, to say the least of it, are fatally inconsistent with themselves.

A comparison, besides, if it be not absolutely unmeaning, must have *some* similarity between its constituent parts; yet where is this to be found, in respect to the Aaronic and Christian priesthods, unless it be conceded that the services of both have the same objective termination? If the one is an advocacy for men with God, and the other be merely an embassy from God to men, so far from being similar, they stand in a situation of perfect mutual contrast. They completely turn their backs upon each other, and move away in opposite directions; and in the contrariety of their movements, they demonstrate the ex-

istence of a thorough difference in their respective qualities and designs. The slaughter of victims on the divine altar, the burning of incense to God, and the sprinkling of blood towards the seat of his manifestative residence, have nothing in common with the promulgation of a system of morality, the confirmation of it by suffering, the exhibition of an example of piety to mankind, and the deliverance of them from their enemies. The one class of actions can in no imaginable way, be compared, with propriety or sense, to the other. Socinians must either regard the parallel which Paul draws between them as nonsensical, and all go along with some of their writers in the blasphemy of pronouncing his reasoning to be bungling and inconclusive; or they must give up the notion of Christ's figurative priesthood consisting in officiation to men, and affix to it the same ideas as those which the Scriptures express in describing his people's. In the one way, they virtually deny the inspiration of the sacred volume; in the other, they abandon all their doctrines respecting sacerdotal ministrations; and, in either, they inflict a deadly wound upon their own creed.

Were it even conceded, then, that the name 'priest' as applied to Christ is metaphorical, nothing would be granted from which consistent Socinianism could acquire support; but a dilemma, on the contrary, would be formed, on either of whose horns it would be transfixed and destroyed. Such a concession, however, ruinous as it would be to the Socinian faith, the word of God will not allow us to make. It takes vastly higher ground than this itself would give it, and affirms that the Saviour's sacerdotal services not merely have the same direction as those of Aaron, but that they are likewise composed of the same materials. It shews that they consist, not in the figurative sacrifices of praise and

thanksgiving, but in the literal presentation of blood. It, consequently, warrants us to advance a step farther, and to view the priesthood of Christ as being strictly real.

The evidence on which we rest this assertion is of no ambiguous or slender description. It is precisely the same as that on which we believe the reality of any character which the Redeemer sustains,—the frequent recurrence, in the divine word, of the names and the phrases which describe it. Christ is called ‘a priest’ in a number of the plainest passages of the Bible,—he is called so in contexts which are purely argumentative, which do not embody a single example of tropical phraseology, and in which the employment of it is forbidden by the first laws of composition. There are, it is true, many passages in which names, and that of ‘priest’ among the rest, occur in a metaphorical signification; but these are uniformly of a declamatory or hortatory description, stand in connexions which fully prepare the mind for meeting with rhetorical language, and contain explanatory statements which both hint the presence of figurative epithets, and furnish a key for understanding their literal import. They are places, however, of an altogether different kind, in which sacerdotal appellations are given to the Saviour. They are those in which the introduction of tropes would be a departure from all correct writing, and a certain means of misleading the judgment. They are, with scarcely an exception, places in which an approach is made neither to embellishment nor illustration by metaphor, whose object is not the excitement of the feelings, but the information and conviction of the understanding, whose abstract and didactic nature is inconsistent with the use of figures, and in the context of which nothing is found either to countenance the existence of a trope, or to suggest the literal idea which it might be intended to convey. The whole

Scriptures, in fact, do not, if the name 'priest' when given to the Redeemer be metaphorical, furnish a single hint for decyphering its meaning,—a fact which is itself sufficient to convince every man, who has not the Swedenborgianism that makes a trope of every thing which comes before it, that, on this subject, they are designed to speak and to be understood according to the proper and literal import of their words.

There are, moreover, passages which, without the belief and assumption of this, are made absolutely unmeaning and ridiculous. Without viewing the Christian priesthood to be as strictly real as the Levitical, how, for example, can we see either point or sense in the reasoning,—'If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, for under it the people received the law, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.'^{*} Two priesthoods are here spoken of; and if the reality of either be denied, the connexion which is averred to exist between them must be worse than preposterous,—a connexion which would affirm something to be inferior to nothing, make that which is real to be abrogated by what is altogether visionary, and assign a rhetorical figure as the cause of a material effect. Averment is made that the one priesthood's abrogation of the other is synonymous with 'a change,' and implies the superiority of that which succeeds to its predecessor; yet in what imaginable qualities of it could this superiority consist, if it were not itself a reality? or with what propriety can that be called 'a change' which, affecting only the relative properties of the substance, is nevertheless, if that which remains be merely a shadow,

^{*} Heb. vii. 11, 12.

an obliteration of the thing itself, and the substitution of it with what is destitute of existence? This would not be '*a change*' but an *annihilation*; and Paul, in calling it so, would be guilty of perverting both words and ideas.

There would on this supposition, besides, be no truth in arguing from the figurative succession, to the abolition of the ceremonial institutions. For, if the supplanting priesthood had itself no real existence, no laws could be enacted for the regulation of its ministrations. To suppose the legislation of any law respecting it, would be to imagine the Divine Being employed in the preposterous work of making statutes for guiding the movements of what has no being. If the priesthood do not exist, neither can the law. There would, hence, be something worse than futility in Paul's attempt to prove that a merely supposititious enactment annulled a code of laws which were actually in force. This would be to prove the necessity of one system being abolished in consequence of its supercession by a better, which after all is found to be an absolute non-entity.

Socinians here, however, will make a rejoinder, and will remind us that they do not believe Christ's priesthood to have abstractly no being, that they merely maintain it to be something figurative, that a figure always implies a reality though of a different kind from that to which it is metaphorically compared, and that it is therefore unfair to reason upon the supposition of their denying its proper existence. Yet when we are reminded of all this, and even when we overlook its total powerlessness in dashing aside the unhallowed consequences which follow from the Socinian view of the passage before us, we are still unable to perceive, in consistency with it, either cogency or sense in the apostle's argument. The sum of it would still be, that a person improperly called

a priest had arisen, and that as a result of his assuming this figurative character, the commission of those to whom both the name and the thing denoted by it literally belonged, was taken away. And this would be reasoning as futile as ever. For, were there not, long before the advent of the Redeemer, and during in fact the whole of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, many persons to whom, in a metaphorical way, the epithet was given? 'Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel, Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.'* It was applied to the whole Israelitish people from the commencement of the Jewish economy till its close; and, in virtue of its application in the Scriptures of the New Testament to the entire multitude of believers, it has been borne by every saint since the earliest ages of the world. A figurative priesthood, therefore, was nothing new in the days of Christ; and, when predicated of him, it could no more be advanced as a reason of abolishing the Levitical which was real, than when affirmed of the thousands of men who, in every age, have possessed it. In no point of view, consequently, can the apostle's argumentative statement be seen to have consistency or meaning, but by renouncing the idea of our Lord's sacerdotal character being metaphorical, and by regarding him as a priest in the strictest sense of the phraseology.

Again; 'But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.'† In addition to the epithet being here given to the Saviour in a way

* Exod. xix. 3, 6.

† Heb. ix. 11, 12.

which, if it be not employed in its proper signification, will destroy the whole force of the passage in the bearing which the comparison that it institutes has upon the respective excellencies of his pontificate and that of Aaron and his successors, he is described as conducting his official services in the same general manner as those of the former dispensation, and his actions and theirs, in discharging the functions of the sacred office, are declared to have been possessed of essentially the same properties. Both he and Aaron ministered in a sanctuary; and although the Tabernacle of the one was wholly another thing from the Tabernacle of the other, yet each had equally the sacredness which proscribed the performance within it of an action which had any thing but God for its object. Both also carried along with them, in their entrance to its holiest apartment, a portion of sacrificial blood which was sprinkled by them toward the mercy-seat with the same piacular design. Now if it be denied that the place of the Redeemer's ministrations is one which, in a proper sense of the terms, possesses the qualities of a sanctuary exclusively devoted to sacerdotal services, on what principle is it stated to be 'greater and more perfect' than that which was entered by the high-priests under the law? Were it any thing else, it could neither be better nor worse, but something of a totally different nature. Superiority invariably supposes an intrinsic sameness in the things which are compared, and entirely regards the degrees of excellency which they respectively possess. If there be not, therefore, such a sameness in the scene of Christ's performances, and that of the pontifical services under the Jewish economy, it is at best but mere trifling to affirm the one to be either superior or inferior to the other.

If, in the same way, the Redeemer's actings in the Tabernacle which belongs to him be not literally sacer-

dotal, in what manner is Paul to be saved from an imputation of utter confusion in his ideas, when he speaks of them as better than those which were performed by the Levites? Had not the blood which he carried into it been properly sacrificial, and had not the shedding and the sprinkling of it been intended to answer the same purposes as that which was borne into the earthly Holy of Holies by the Aaronites, it is utterly inconceivable how a comparison could have been made of their respective peculiar qualities, or an inquiry instituted regarding their relative connexion and worth. When, therefore, the apostle brings them together for the purpose of pronouncing upon their comparative value, it is obvious that the effusion and the presentation of the one are to be regarded as actions which were as purely pontifical as the consecration and aspersion of the other. In order, consequently, to its being consistently understood, this passage, as well as that to which we previously referred, requires the assumption of a proper reality in the priesthood of Christ.

A number of others equally conclusive might be adduced. From among them, however, we select only another. 'He of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar; for it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.*'

It is of the Saviour that this affirmation is made; and were his pontificate figurative, it would, like the others at which we have glanced, be destitute of truth. It has already been shewn that the name 'priests,' is metaphorically applied in the divine word to the Jews as a nation. Now, if, in the passage before us, its synonymes are to be understood in the same way, it is true neither that none

* Heb. vii. 13, 14.

that the Saviour's sacerdotal ministrations are directed, as theirs were, immediately to the Deity. When the fearful consequences to which the doctrine of its being figurative conducts us are exposed, there is no remaining ground whatever on which this conclusion can be resisted. When two things of the same nature are both shewn to be real, and when they are brought together by inspiration for the purpose of mutual illustration, their intrinsic qualities must necessarily be regarded as identical. As it has, therefore, been proved that the exclusive reference which its sacred services had to God constituted the essence of the Aaronic priesthood, it follows, as a necessary inference, that the same radical property must exist in that of the Redeemer.

In addition, however, to this general and amply satisfactory argument, supported as it is by the universal language of the Old Testament oracles respecting the Levites, there are express scripture testimonies to the doctrine for the vindication of which we have adduced it; and these not only establish the naked fact that the Saviour's sacerdotal actings have the Deity for their object, but also make a pointed declaration, that they are of the nature of an advocacy for men. 'My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'*

The word† which is here translated 'advocate,' properly signifies one who pleads a culprit's cause in a judicial proceeding; or more extendedly, a person who intercedes, on any subject of disagreement, with one indi-

* 1 John ii. 1, 2.

† παρακλητος.

vidual on behalf of another. On one occasion,* indeed, it is applied, in the scriptures, to the Holy Spirit, and employed to describe his character in effecting the work of personal salvation; yet there is nothing in this recurrence of it, to create a suspicion of its having any other signification. The design of the Spirit's mission and operations, was to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment,† to teach the disciples all things, bringing all things to their remembrance whatsoever Christ had spoken,‡ and in both of these respects, to act the part of an intercessor with men for the Redeemer. In the one, he convinced the Jews, by the powerful arguments adduced in the operation of his influences, that they had contracted grievous guilt in judging, crucifying, and rejecting the Saviour as unworthy of their credence; and, in the other, he shewed the things of Christ to the disciples, and furnished them with supernatural gifts by which abundant testimony was borne to the truth and celestial origin of his gospel. A claim had been set up by Jesus, to the Saviourship, and to the consequent belief and regards of men; this they had opposed and rejected; and it was the Spirit's province as 'a paraclete' or 'advocate,' both by direct operations upon the minds of the unbelievers themselves, and by miraculous performances through the instrumentality of the apostles, to establish it, and to convince them of their error in setting it aside. His official work was hence a vindication of the pretensions of Christ, and a pleading on his behalf with the world.

When, then, the same name by which, in the performance of this work, he is designated, is applied to our Lord in respect to his officiations with God, it must be understood to affirm that, while they have a different direction from those of the Spirit, they are equally possessed of the

* John xvi. 7. † John xvi. 8. ‡ John xiv. 26.

nature of an advocacy. In conducting them, he is said to be the advocate which men have with the Father, just as the Holy Ghost is the advocate which he himself has with men; and as the ministrations of the one are directed to our race for the establishment of the gospel's claims, the ministrations of the other must be addressed to God for propitiating him toward the sinner. It is solely on the supposition of sin that the necessity for them is felt; and it is entirely for its removal that they are carried on. It is God against whom the guilt which it is their object to exterminate has been contracted; and it must therefore be only upon him that the advocacy for its remission has its termination.

Nothing can be more preposterous than to suppose that a process of pleading erects the transgressor into the judge, and, while it accounts him condemned, intercedes with himself for the commutation or the doing away of the punishment to which he is obnoxious. Yet it is a doctrine like this which the passage in John is virtually made to speak by the creed of Socinians. They admit, what cannot be denied, that the advocacy assumes the existence of sin, and that it is the Divine Being who sustains the offence of the delinquent act; and meanwhile, for the sake of defending their system, and of arguing down the heavenward direction of the Redeemer's sacerdotal actings, they aver that those performances which he goes into for its removal, have no immediate bearing upon the offended lawgiver, and consist in a sheer exhibition and enforcement of a moral legislation which may tend to moralize the sinner's heart, and ameliorate his conduct. If this be called an advocacy,—and, consistently with the text which is affirmed to teach it, this must be its proper name,—what is it but the pleading of a pannel's cause with himself,—a proceeding of the strangest description which can well be conceived? The sentiment is of a na-

ture sufficiently wild to refute itself. Were any thing else necessary to expose it, we have it in the intimate connexion which is declared to exist between the advocacy and a previous propitiation for sin, in the palpable manner in which the advocate is represented as acting *for* and not *to* men, and in the clearness with which he is exhibited as being with God for the purpose of performing his official services. There is not the remotest reference made either to prophetic or regal functions; the entire ministration is declared to consist of a propitiation, and a process of overt pleading; and the whole of it is averred to be addressed to the Deity. This is the obvious import of John's language. To give it any other, is to make it have none.

Again: * Every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices.* This is a general and abstract definition of an high-priesthood; and although it does not, for that reason, make express mention of our Lord, we are warranted, from the scope of the apostle's reasoning in the context, to view it as being, in all its breadth and length, as applicable to him as it is to Aaron and his posterity. In order to afford suitable consolation to the persecuted Christians, he had been held up to their contemplation as possessed of the highest and most tender sympathy for them amidst their accumulated sufferings; he had been set before them under the appellation of their high-priest who, in discharging the functions of his sacred office, had been tried in all points like as they were, yet without sin; they had been requested to identify his susceptible and sympathizing dispositions acquired by his personal subjection to calamity, with the radical qualities and the intrinsic nature of his pontificate; and now, for the purpose

* Heb. v. 1.

of shewing them the broad ground on which they had to go in this identification, they are told that every high-priest, while his general business is an acting for men in things pertaining to God, requires, for the right execution of it, to be able to have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, and to have been himself encompassed with infirmity. This statement, besides including the Saviour, in virtue of his having the same name and literally the same official character as Aaron, is thus seen to apply to him both from the introduction of it with the specific design of illustrating the nature of his services, and from the equal predication of him and the Aaronites, of exposure to affliction, and of a consequent capacity of compassion, as essential accompaniments of their procedure. That which rendered these indispensable in the one, is the same thing which demands the possession of them by the other. The necessity, therefore, of their being had by Christ, originates solely in his occupying the situation of an high-priest, and in his acting 'for men in things pertaining to God.'

This, then, is a definition of his priesthood,—a definition which so explicitly declares his work to be an officiation for men as to make it inconceivable how, in the face of it, assertion can be made that they are the objects to whom its services are addressed. In a variety of places where it occurs, the exact import of the preposition* rendered 'for' has, it is true, been much controverted between the friends and the enemies of proper atonement, and, according to the views of the respective parties, has been differently determined. In any one of the senses, however, which, in all its diversified situations, it has been made to bear, the use of it here is wholly incompatible with Socinian doctrine. Whether it be translated 'on account

* *υπερ*.

of,' 'in the room of,' 'on behalf of,' 'concerning,' 'above,' or 'beyond,'—renderings which include all the shades of signification which belong to it in its various connexions,—there is not the smallest approximation made to the notion of its meaning 'to' or 'towards;' but, on the other hand, a decided intimation is given of its moving entirely away, in some direction or another, from the object with the name of which it is construed. The construction of it, therefore, with the word 'man,' plainly implies the priestly ministrations to move off to some other point than that which is occupied by him; and the immediate use, along with it, of a preposition * construed with the name of the Deity, the legitimate acceptance of which is 'motion towards,' leaves us in no doubt respecting their termination upon Jehovah.

It may be replied, indeed, that this word is a constituent part of an idiomatic phrase † which, in accordance with the translation of it in the authorized version 'things pertaining to,' generally denotes mere possession, and that there is nothing discordant with the idea of the Saviour's services respecting things belonging to God, in affirming them to be addressed to men. While the latter part of this reply, however, is very limitedly true, there is evidence in the nature of the idiom itself, that no part of it whatever is applicable to the case before us. It is true enough that the original phrase signifies possession; but, in its construction with the name of the Divine Being, this proves the very thing for which we contend. Can any thing which belongs to the Creator, be transferred to the creature? Yet such a transference would, on the authority of this idiom, be made, if Christ's sacerdotal ministrations were diverted away from him as their object, and addressed to our race. Worship belongs to God;

* πρὸς.

† τὰ πρὸς.

and who will pretend to say that, without enormous impiety, this can be given to any thing created ?

Nor is it better than idle to rejoin that priestly performances are things of a religious nature, and that, with religion in general, they belong to man as a religious being. This very fact is proof of their heavenward direction. Religion has nothing more to do with man than as the subject of its practical fruits. Its actions and manifestations have respect to none but the Deity. Upon the same principle, therefore, that supreme homage, belonging as it does to God, cannot be rendered to a creature, the sacerdotal actings of Christ must terminate wholly on the Supreme Being.

In asserting this, even higher ground can be taken. For, besides affirming that a High Priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, the passage appends the explanatory statement, 'that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices.' Now, in whatever way these gifts and sacrifices may be viewed, it cannot, after what has been proved respecting the literal ones offered by the Levites, and the metaphorical ones presented by believers, be pretended that they can have respect to any but Jehovah. To whom but God, can eucharistical and sacrificial presentations, with impunity, be made ? They had, it has been shewn, single-handed reference to him when they came from the hands of high-priests under the former economy ; and the equal inclusion of Christ and the Aaronites in Paul's definition of a pontificate, demands the belief of their having the same direction from the hands of the Redeemer. In the amplest manner then we are again carried to the conclusion, that the business of his priesthood is throughout a process of ministration, which has the well-being of man for its end, but which addresses its efforts entirely to the Creator. In conducting it, therefore, he discharges the functions of an advocacy with God for our race.

Such is a specimen of the evidence on the authority of which we believe the Saviour's priestly services to be throughout a ministration to the Deity on behalf of men. And when we remember the current language of the scriptures on the subject of his priesthood—'he entered into heaven itself to appear *in the presence of God for us*,'* 'he loved us and gave himself *for us*, an offering and a sacrifice *to God*, for a sweet smelling savor,'† 'he offered himself without spot *to God*,'‡ 'he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him seeing he ever liveth to *make intercession for them*'§—it appears altogether unnecessary to adduce any further proof in support of the doctrine for which we have been contending. The evidence which has already been exhibited is sufficient, we apprehend, to satisfy a candid mind of its truth; and the occasional strictures which have been made upon the tenet which is opposed to it, may afford some idea of the sore perplexities into which we would be launched by setting it aside. It is upheld by express declarations of the divine word, by the many arguments which establish the godward direction of the sacred services in the Levitical sanctuary, by the close parallel which is drawn, throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, between the sacerdotal characters of Christ and of Aaron, by the demonstrable absence of all metaphor in the passages which either directly or indirectly refer to it, and by the general tenor of inspired phraseology respecting priestly actions. Sustained, therefore, as it is, by such a mass of conclusive proof, we feel ourselves thoroughly authorised to return to our original definition of a priesthood, and to affirm its official work to be an advocacy with God for men. In order, consequently, to a thorough understanding of its general business, it only remains for us to

* Heb. ix. 24. † Eph. v. 2. ‡ Heb. ix. 14. § Heb. vii. 25.

ascertain the materials of which this advocacy is composed, and to enquire whether those actions of a didactic and judicial description which were performed by the high-priests under the law are to be viewed as sacerdotal.

In companionship with the controversy respecting the literal or figurative nature of Christ's priesthood, conflicting sentiments are entertained regarding the instrumentality which it employs for exterminating sin. By one party it is alleged that this is nothing more than the exhibition of a clear and confirmed code of moral law, the enforcement of it by the adduction of sufficient motives to a compliance with its precepts, and the suppression by kingly power of any hostile agency which might tend to counteract its influence. This doctrine, however, is in direct opposition to every thing which has been proved regarding the direction in which priestly ministrations move, assumes them to address themselves to man both as their subject and their object, and is therefore totally inadmissible. That cannot be an advocacy with God which directs to him none of its services; nor can there be consistency in it, if any of its efforts are plied toward the offending creature. Were it even possible, by direct endeavours of a prophetic and regal description, so completely to destroy the sinner's guilt and pollution as to make him, irrespective of any other agency being put forth on his behalf, a fit object of divine complacency, this would still be in no respect a pleading for him with God, but a mere moralization of his own nature. Intercession necessarily differs, in all its intrinsic ingredients, from either judicial acquittal, or moral renovation. These may result from it as consequences, but they cannot be identified with the actual performance of its duties. Its ministrations are all essentially directed to the offended. Any thing, therefore, which is done

immediately to the offender, lies beyond their proper sphere of action.

In the execution, then, of this advocacy, the parties who are interested in its performances, must stand in a very different relative situation from that in which they would be placed by the Socinian hypothesis. The transgressor stands at the bar, with God before him as his judge; his criminality is established upon the clearest evidence; he has, in virtue of it, already come under the partial infliction of penal vengeance; his only hope of escape from still sorer tribulation rests on the effectiveness and prevalency of his council's pleadings; and he looks exclusively to his official procedure for the accomplishment of his deliverance. The advocate, cast thus entirely upon his own resources, assuming and acknowledging his client's guilt, avowing a persuasion of his being worthy of death, turning his back upon the criminal in the manifest hopelessness of effecting his rescue by dealing with himself, directing his attention solely to the righteously incensed judge,—placed in such a situation, how can he proceed? how can he draw forth the yearnings of compassion, and induce the exercise of mercy? how can he invent a single argument for the remission of the crime? how can he cherish the remotest hope of succeeding in his work? how can he, without fanaticism, imagine any thing but discomfiture to be the upshot of his endeavors? How? In no way surely but by himself becoming the sinner's surety, and by making some adequate amends to God for the mischief he has perpetrated. To plead without a plea would be worse than folly; and where, in a case like this and under a moral government, is any plea to be found but in the payment of a piacular ransom to the violated law? Justice must be satisfied, sin must be treated in accordance with its tremendous deserts, iniquity must not meet with the

shadow of connivance, no foundation must be laid for the hope of any other moral agents sinning with impunity, wickedness must be sternly visited with a judicial retribution, as well as sinless integrity rewarded with exalted happiness,—and hence must the offender's deliverance from judgment be vindicated by a satisfactory amends being made for his transgressions.

Nor are we to suppose that such an amends can be rendered by himself, or that there can be found any efficient materials of his advocate's plea in his own character or conduct. There cannot be so much as the allegation made that he has lived blamelessly till the period when some given act of iniquity was committed; nor can there be a well substantiated averment that, with the exception of a few insulated transgressions, his moral character is praiseworthy, and his conduct of general utility to the government under which he lives. He is a felon who well knew the laws of his king, and the consequences of breaking them; who deliberately threw them to the wind, and became a habitual and wilful violator of all their injunctions; and whose crimes and general habits of life tarnish over every circumstance which might else have been urged in extenuation of his guilt. His character forbids that any thing in himself should be advanced by way of even recommending him to mercy.

All this is necessarily presupposed by the direction which the mediation takes that has been set on foot for his deliverance. In its functions of advocacy, it looks entirely away from him, nor once directs an effort to himself,—a fact which obviously assumes the total absence in him of a single property on which it could build an argument in his favor. Were there any moral material in his nature to work upon, by the resuscitation and developement of which there might be drawn forth a

sufficiency of worth to counterbalance and extirpate the evils he has contracted, and to bring him back to a possession of the blessings which are embodied in the manifestations of divine favor; the redeeming ministration might be expected to exert its energies solely upon himself, and to effect its purposes by reproducing the moral excellencies which are thus supposed to be merely in a state of dormancy or concealment. Since we find, however, that no such mode of action is practised by it, and that God, on the contrary, is the terminating point of its efforts, the conclusion respecting it is irresistible, that, in utter despair of discovering any quality in the heart or procedure of man on which it could venture to hope for success in its undertaking, it rests its expectations on something altogether extraneous.

There is thus nothing palliative or recommendatory of the sinner to be found in himself. Where, then, is his advocate to gather arguments for enforcing his requests on his behalf, but in some reparative or amends-making work performed by himself? In the absence of every thing in his client which can support his plea, all his hopes of succeeding must be flung back upon his personal influence with the law-giver; and, in a case where satisfaction requires to be made to an injured moral government, and a vindication afforded of the purity and inflexibility of the precepts and penal sanction of its law, such an influence can exist only on the assumption of his having vicariously satisfied, by a peculiar obedience, the demands of justice. His personal worth must become substitutionary; from his superior moral dignity material must be brought for paying the price of the culprit's moral ransom; the deserts of his spotless righteousness must be transferred to him in law; and a true atonement must consequently be made. Such is the only way in which any personal influence can be compatible with his

peculiar circumstances in reference to the criminal. When in this way, however, it has originated, he may confidently use it with the judge, and erect upon it a firm and triumphant pleading. We hence infer that the advocacy with God for man which is conducted by the Redeemer, consists of furnishing the ingredients of a suitable and adequate plea, and of an employment of them in presenting and enforcing requests for his well-being, or that, in other words, it divides itself into the two functions of expiation and intercession.

These, accordingly, are represented as comprising all the actions of a priest in every passage where a summation or general statement of them is introduced. All the presentations which, under the old economy, were made to God, constituted either acts of overt worship, or an expiatory process; and just as the entire sacerdotal work of making them is called 'a ministration or approach to God,'—a phrase which we have seen to be synonymous with 'advocacy,'—so a division of it is frequently made into an immolation of the sacrifices made by fire, and an offering up of the bread of God, intended manifestly to point out and distinguish its piacular and intercessory departments. 'The priests shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God, for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God they do offer.*' 'No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire; he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.†' 'Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet-smelling savor unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.‡' While the one class of presenta-

* Lev. xxi. 6. † Verse 21. ‡ Numb. xxviii. 2.

tions, including sin, and burnt, and trespass offerings, were intended to make atonement for sin, and are all in numberless places of the ritual affirmed to have been piacular; the other class, comprehending tithes, the shew-bread, and meat, drink, heave, and peace offerings, were designed either as expressions of thanksgiving, or as supplications for future mercies. They are hence, in a passage where Paul evidently has in view to distinguish their respective qualities, denominated, in harmony with the classification of Moses, 'gifts and sacrifices.' 'While the first tabernacle was yet standing, it was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, which could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.* The piacular or purely sacrificial class were demanded as indispensable to the doing away of ceremonial defilement, and, after its contraction, could not with impunity be withheld; but the other, or those which are called 'gifts' or 'the bread of God' were free-will offerings, and, from their eucharistical or supplicatory properties, constituted a pleading which was superinduced upon the purgatory services by which they were uniformly preceded. In the oblation of them, consequently, and in the destination of each to its own distinct sphere in the performances of the sanctuary, a clear exhibition was made of the two functions of intercession and atonement; and in the exclusion of every other description of services from the sacred officiations, a decided intimation was given that, under the Jewish dispensation, and in reference therefore to a priesthood in its own abstract nature, these are the only functions which are sacerdotal.

In the definition of a priesthood to which we formerly referred, this is unambiguously taught. 'Every High

* Heb. ix. 9.

Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin.* Precisely the same terms are here used in drawing a line of demarcation between two species of pontifical ministrations in general, as those which are employed to separate and define those of the Levites; a tacit yet obvious declaration is made that each possesses a generic difference of nature from the other; and not the remotest hint is given of any thing else, in addition to them, entering into a high-priest's performances. If such be not the import of the passage,—if it do not affirm, both that the offering of gifts and the presentation of sacrifices, or intercession and expiation, are works equally sacerdotal, and that these form the entire sum of an high-priest's official deeds,—there is nothing in it but what is fitted to convey false impressions to the mind,—nothing but a virtual and perplexing equivocation. It professes to give a summary view of the work and qualifications of a priest, and yet entirely confines them to eucharistical and peculiar offerings. This must either be the whole truth, or part of it is suppressed; and such a suppression would as certainly mislead the judgment as either a wilful misrepresentation, or an addition of what is false.

When especially the same definition is elsewhere introduced for the purpose of instituting a comparison between the official services of Christ and Aaron,—‘For every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer; for if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests who offer gifts according to the law,’†—and when the enumeration of the duties of the one is made with the view of furnishing an argument respecting the kind and number of the duties of the

* Heb. v. 1.

† Heb. viii. 3, 4.

other, the supposition of the statement being either defective or redundant, is wholly inconsistent with inspiration, or even with an honest intention to communicate correct information to the mind. Nor is it almost possible that such a supposed retrenchment of what ought to be included, or engraftment of what is extraneous, should exist, since there is such a perfect agreement among all the places where the description of a priesthood occurs. They all, without exception or discrepancy, concur in giving precisely the same view of its functions, all representing them as only two in number, and uniting in ascribing to them respectively the same ingredients and properties. This we regard as sufficient proof that each of them apart as well as all of them combined, gives a definition of sacerdotal ministrations which, without excess or deficiency, is strictly concordant with truth.

It is in merely apparent disagreement with this conclusion that many of the priests under the former economy occupied the judicial chair, and engaged in the work of deciding controversies. This did not properly belong to them in their sacerdotal character; but was an annexation to it, in the absence of other sufficiently qualified persons to perform them, of the duties of a totally different office.

The truth of this averment may be shewn from a variety of considerations, and may be evinced especially from the manner in which the first appointment of them to the judicial work was given. 'If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, then shalt thou arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment; and the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the

Lord thy God, even that man shall die, and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.* Not only does it appear, from the fact of this investment of them with judicial prerogatives having been subsequent to the erection of the sacerdotal office and to the full defining of all the duties which belonged to it, that the delegation to them of a power to decide civil controversies was altogether independent of their proper character in itself; but there is likewise evidence, in the peculiar circumstances in which they were permitted to give judgment, in the co-adjutorship with them of one who ostensibly held the situation of a judge, in such a designation of them as points out their specific work as consisting in 'a ministration before the Lord,' and in the rareness with which the precise description of controversial cases could occur in which their interference was required, that it was purely superinduced, and is to be viewed in the light of a mere appendage with which they either might or might not have individually had concern. There was one with whom they were always to be conjoined when sitting in judicature to whom the work of a judge specifically belonged. Their companionship with him in questions of difficulty was, in all probability, designed merely as an aid in leading his mind to a minuter knowledge of those portions of the divine law by which they were to be decided. We hence surmise, what is abundantly taught by their actual history, that there was no absolute injunction upon them individually to engage in the service of assisting him, that the obligation to perform it was altogether indefinite, respected them only as a body, and, with a preference of the best qualified, pronounced any of them eligible, and that, with the exception therefore of comparatively a few of them, they never actually entered it. Yet these are

* Deut. xvii. 8, 9, 12.

things, both in the circumstances of the appointment itself, and in the facts of accomplishing its designs, not one of which could have been true, had it made the duties of a judge an integral part of sacerdotal performances. It would then,—unless they had laid themselves open to punishment,—have obliged them to have sat in the judicial chair; it would, without exception, have invested all of them with the judicial character; and it would have made the performance of judicial duties as indispensable in each of them as the offering of the bread of God, and the offerings of the Lord made by fire. Since, however, it brought along with it no such obligations, but, on the other hand, was discursive and general in its requirements,—since it was announced in a way of utter unconnectedness with the institution of a priesthood, and long after the precepts enjoining and describing its proper services had been given,—and since it not only permitted but expressly commanded other individuals than those who were of Aaron's posterity to occupy the seat of judgment,—a fact which, on the supposition of the judicial work being sacerdotal, breaks a lance with each of the numerous laws which prohibited any but pure Aaronites from assuming the priestly garb; we are fully carried to the conclusion, that the decision of civil controversies was, in no point of view whatever, a function of the Levitical priesthood.

Similar considerations place in the same attitude the work of reading and expounding the law to the people. This has also been regarded as a part of sacerdotal ministrations. The authority to which we have been referred for the doctrine is a solitary passage, 'The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*' There is here, however, nothing inconsistent with a belief

* Mal. ii. 7.

that the service which it ascribes to the Levites was an adjunct to their original and sacred sphere of performance. Like the work of pronouncing judgment, it was not conjoined with the priesthood till after it had been instituted, and had for a considerable period, existed without any services but those of the altar; nor is mention made of it in the many laws which were given for regulating its official movements. It was not, in its execution, confined entirely, nor, from any thing that appears to the contrary, even generally to the Levites. Although some of them, in common with many who were of other tribes, employed themselves in performing it, they were always, as well as the others, called, in reference to it, 'Scribes,' and had their other titles absorbed in this. Hence, notwithstanding Ezra having been denominated a priest in virtue of his having served at the altar, no sooner is the narration made of his having read and explained the law to the multitude than, in conjunction with his usual appellation, he is spoken of as a 'Scribe.*' This is a sufficient proof that inspiration viewed him as invested simultaneously with the prerogatives of two perfectly distinct offices, and that the scribeship was therefore a thing totally detached in itself from the priesthood.

The reason, then, of the priests having sometimes acted as judges and expositors,—works to which others as well as they were eligible,—was not any connexion which subsisted between such actions and their official obligations, but merely the special acquaintanceship which they had with the divine word, and the want of other individuals who possessed it in an equally eminent degree. In order to their being able to discriminate all the minute varieties of sacrifices and ablutions which were prescribed for removing the guilt and impurity of the endless num-

* Neh. viii. 1, 2, 4, 13.

ber and gradations of ceremonial sins, they required to be continually investigating the ritual, comparing the various statutes, and ruminating over them in their minds. This gave them an intimate and thorough versedness in all the materials and applications of the divine law. It was hence that expediency dictated the propriety of the last appeal being made to them for a solution of difficulties respecting the interpretation of disputed precepts,—that, in matters too hard to be settled by men whose knowledge of the divine word was limited, their superior acquaintanceship with it was availed of for unfolding its more recondite judicial precepts,—and that despair of finding others adapted to the performance of the work, frequently selected them as persons the most fitly qualified for acting as the scribes of the people. There was thus, in virtue of peculiar circumstances, a superinduction upon the priesthood of actions which sprang not from the sacerdotal functions; and yet there was, in spite of it, the most careful distinction uniformly made, on the part both of the priests and the people, between what was secular and what was sacred in every mixed history of a Levite. In other things than those of sacrificing, he was seen to come into co-adjutorship with scribes and judges merely as an auxiliary. He bore the name and sustained the character of a priest only when he served at the altar.

Nothing exists, however, to create such an annexation of foreign material to a priesthood, in an economy where all the parts of a mediation between God and man, as well those the services of which are addressed to our race as those whose efforts terminate upon the Deity, are furnished with official agencies which are all, without other aid than their own, fitted to act effectively in the spheres which they respectively occupy. While the one depart-

ment has a priesthood which, as will afterwards be shewn, perfectly accomplishes of itself both a piacular and an intercessory advocacy with God; the other is furnished with a kingship and a prophetic tutorship which just as completely, on the other hand, effect all that the mediation, in its immediate dealing with man, can require in a process of governing and judging mankind and of explaining to them the divine will. The regal and prophetic offices of Christ are as perfect in themselves as his sacerdotal. While in discharging their respective functions, he does every thing which was performed in the different superinduced characters of the Levites, there can be no imaginable reason for detaching from them the works of teaching and of executively judging which are as inherently connected with them as a stream is with its fountain or an effect with its cause, and for appending them to the priestship with which they have not and cannot have the most remote official relationship. As a king and a prophet, the Redeemer accomplishes all the designs of his mediation which have man as the object of ministration; and as a priest, he is left in regard to those ends of it which are gained by an advocacy with the Deity, to act exclusively with Jehovah.

We have thus, in the form of a conclusion, drawn from a series both of insulated and of mutually dependent arguments, arrived at the position with which we set out, and have shewn both that a priesthood consists of an advocacy with the Divine Being on behalf of men, and that its only functions are those of atonement and intercession. With this conclusion before our minds, established on such a breadth and variety of ground, it is perhaps unnecessary to discuss at length the many proofs which can be adduced in support of the doctrines of expiation and intercession individually; but as it is of vital importance

to have a clear understanding of all the materials which enter into a discharge of each of the functions, we shall devote two separate chapters to an enquiry into their nature.

CHAP. III.

ATONEMENT.

Expiation is the removal of guilt from a transgressor by the immolation of a victim which vicariously sustains the punishment to which he has rendered himself obnoxious. He occupies the situation of a condemned culprit who has incurred the righteous wrath of his lawgiver, who has disturbed, by his iniquity, the repose of the moral government under which he is placed, and who has no resources of his own whence he can render a sufficient amends for the mischief he has wrought. It is on this account that nothing but the substitution of him by another who is willing and able to undergo the wrath which he has merited, can be expected to accomplish his rescue from condemnation. The substitute who acts and suffers in his room is the victim sacrificed in a piacular work. When such a substitute has been found, and has expressed his readiness to become the sacrificial surety of the sinner, and when the moral governor has pronounced it accordant with his will that he should be offered up, and has intimated that the ends of justice will be satisfactorily answered by his oblation; it is then the work of the priest to sacrifice him in the way appointed by the lawgiver, to present to him his blood, and to employ its

presentation as an argument for enforcing the petitions of his advocacy.

The victim which was offered by the Redeemer was himself—he was both the offering and the offerer. He took the place of man, became answerable to God for the guilt he had contracted, endured in his stead the penalty due to his sins, and neutralized all the ingredients of the curse under which he had been laid. This constituted the sum of his atonement. In discussing it, therefore, it is necessary to enquire into its reality, the various actions which it embodied, the sacrificial qualities of Christ which gave it efficiency, and its different moral results.

SECT. I.

The Reality of the Atonement.

It has already been proved that the priesthood of Christ is strictly literal, and that unless we regard its performances as parallel with those of the priesthood which was held by Aaron and his posterity, we involve a large portion of God's word in self-contradiction and absurdity. The minute comparison which is drawn between them in the epistle to the Hebrews, does not respect them in any mere abstract point of view, but has an exclusive reference to the nature and material of their functions. Its design is not only to shew that they are to be regarded as equally real, but also to evince an identity of nature in their grand official ministrations. It occupies itself with stating acknowledged facts respecting the services of the one, for the purpose of explaining

and illustrating the services of the other; and it arrives at the termination of its undertaking, by giving a full developement of the coincidences which are to be found in their respective works of atonement and intercession.

This is especially true with respect to the piacular function. 'And every High Priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God, for by one offering, he hath perfected for ever those for whom he made atonement.'* 'And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.† 'Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God, but into the second went the High Priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; but Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.‡

Now all this is obviously without meaning, unless we understand the sacrificial doings of Christ to have had essentially the same nature and design as those of Aaron. The reality of either is equally well attested, and rests upon unequivocal evidence. Without assuming this, where does the possibility lie of discovering sense in an

* Heb. x. 11, 12, 14. † Heb. ix. 22, 23. ‡ ix. 6, 7, 11, 12.

argument which first compares their respective excellencies, and then pronounces upon the one's inferiority to the other? The disparity which is affirmed to exist between them respects entirely the degree of efficiency which they possessed, and manifestly views them as the same in substance, and different only in the quantity of their moral virtue. The one is spoken of as the other's type, shadow, pattern, or prefiguration, is represented as having the power of accomplishing no higher purposes than 'the purifying of the flesh,' and, in regard to piacular efficacy, is averred to be far outpeered by its antitype. This 'purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God;' that cleansed the flesh from ceremonial infirmities. Both are truly expiatory, but each has its own peculiar compass of piacular influence. What was done by the one in a way purely prefigurative or ritual, is accomplished by the other in a manner altogether absolute and effective. While, therefore, the Aaronic and Christian sacrifices are to be alike regarded as bearing upon the extermination of sin by a vicarious endurance of its penalty, the latter stands if possible upon superior ground for the proof of its reality, and is to be carefully distinguished from the former in the sublimity of its nature and the grandeur of its results.

The parallel, then, which is drawn between them does something more than evince their equal literality. It displays the actual worth and surpassing glory of that of the Redeemer. When, consequently, we have rolled away the mist which has, in some quarters, been thrown round the import of the Levitical ministrations, we will discover that a brilliant light is emitted by them and reflected upon those of Christ.

Now although it is repeatedly stated that the Jewish sacrifices 'could never take away sins,'* nor 'make him

* Heb. x. 11.

that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience;* yet this averment refers in no way to their essential nature, solely regards the meagreness of their effects, holds them up to view as types which could not have the productiveness or the redeeming influence of that which they typified, and is modified and explained by statements in the context which declare them to have been 'offered up for the sins of the people,'† 'for the errors of the nation,'‡ and for the expiatory 'purification of the flesh,'§—language which could not have been applied to them if, notwithstanding their want of power to remove moral guilt in an absolute and definitive way, they had not been prefiguratively, and, in some sense, actually piacular. It is not what they did for man as a moral agent, but what they did typically, ceremonially, or in design, which must determine our view of their nature. Now, look at the matter as we will, the very connexion in which the declarations of their powerlessness occur, and the comparison of them as things which accomplished only a cleansing from ritual impurity, with a blood which is affirmed to effect a purgation of the defilements of the heart, plainly establish their piacularity in respect at once to the flesh, to the intention of the offerer, and to the prefigurativeness of their import. Many of them were made in circumstances which rendered it utterly impossible that they could have reference to any thing but the guilt of offenders, or that their design could be any other than its removal by their substitutionary absorption of its punishment. It had brought the subjects of it under a variety of legal and religious disabilities, shutting them out from certain species of intercourse with society, from the enjoyment of several important privi-

* Heb. ix. 9.

† Heb. vii. 27.

‡ Heb. ix. 7.

§ Verse 13.

leges of political life, and from an approach to the Divine Being in the instituted ordinances of his worship. It had done all this in virtue of its being guilt in a proper sense of the phraseology, involving qualities either positively or symbolically moral, which were offensive to the lawgiver in their nature, and condemning to the possessor of them in their influence. Yet so completely was it removed by the oblation of the appointed sacrifices, that, immediately upon their being offered on account of it, the excommunicated sinners were restored to the bosom of their friends, brought back to the courts of the sanctuary, and pronounced legally purified and guiltless men. This was properly a moral result, and it uniformly accrued from them in every case where they were admissible. Without them, the individual was punished ; but with them, he was reinvested with the right of enjoyment which he had forfeited. During the entire economy, judicial vengeance was averted by them, whenever the laws of the sanctuary allowed them to be made. Its execution, in any instance, upon the criminal, sprang from the too great enormity of his transgression to be expiated by the blood of the inferior animals. When a sinner was rescued from punishment, it was to sacrificial interference that he was indebted for his deliverance ; and when he personally underwent the wrath which he had incurred, it was not because the sacrifices had no efficacy, but because they had not efficacy enough, to avert it. Whether, consequently, they were presented or not, there was, both in their oblation and in the absence of it, a testimony erected to their intentional and actual piacularity.

While in one point of view, therefore, the Jewish sacrifices were expiatory simply as ‘ shadows of good things to come,’ they can be proved to have been literally so in another. They were inefficient merely ‘ as pertaining to

that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience;* yet this averment refers in no way to their essential nature, solely regards the meagreness of their effects, holds them up to view as types which could not have the productiveness or the redeeming influence of that which they typified, and is modified and explained by statements in the context which declare them to have been 'offered up for the sins of the people,'† 'for the errors of the nation,'‡ and for the expiatory 'purification of the flesh,'§—language which could not have been applied to them if, notwithstanding their want of power to remove moral guilt in an absolute and definitive way, they had not been prefiguratively, and, in some sense, actually piacular. It is not what they did for man as a moral agent, but what they did typically, ceremonially, or in design, which must determine our view of their nature. Now, look at the matter as we will, the very connexion in which the declarations of their powerlessness occur, and the comparison of them as things which accomplished only a cleansing from ritual impurity, with a blood which is affirmed to effect a purgation of the defilements of the heart, plainly establish their piacularity in respect at once to the flesh, to the intention of the offerer, and to the prefigurativeness of their import. Many of them were made in circumstances which rendered it utterly impossible that they could have reference to any thing but the guilt of offenders, or that their design could be any other than its removal by their substitutionary absorption of its punishment. It had brought the subjects of it under a variety of legal and religious disabilities, shutting them out from certain species of intercourse with society, from the enjoyment of several important privi-

* Heb. ix. 9.

† Heb. vii. 27.

‡ Heb. ix. 7.

§ Verse 13.

the conscience ;' and though they could not expiate iniquity regarded as a violation of the moral laws of the universe, nor extricate man from the divine wrath which he has incurred in his abstract moral agency, they still fully atoned for those peculiar modifications of sin that were committed under the mere ceremonial administration which was set up among the Israelites at the legislation from Sinai.

The laws of the ritual had no power, it is true, to subject an individual who transgressed them to any punitive retribution in the future state of existence, were enforced by a penal sanction of mere ecclesiastical and political excommunication, and had respect to men solely as members of the Israelitish family, and subjects of the constitution of peculiarity which was established with their nation ; yet they were, notwithstanding all this, laws of divine enactment, made positive demands upon the ceremonial purity of those who were under them, and constituted the person who possessed any of the qualities or performed any of the actions which they proscribed as ritually sinful,—who was a leper, had an issue of blood, contracted a mongrel marriage, or came tangibly in contact with the dead,—as truly a sinner against the Sinaitic legislation, as the moral law declares every individual who violates its precepts a criminal against God viewed as the moral governor of the world. What they denounced were not properly moral sins ; but, just because they were marked with disapprobation by a law which God had promulgated, they were nevertheless oblique in themselves, and rendered the subjects of them obnoxious to the punishments of a Theocracy. Notwithstanding their destitution of moral qualities, and the impossibility of many of them,—such as leprosy and contagion from a human corpse,—being invested with the properties of moral blame or praiseworthiness, they were still violations of

express divine statutes. This, therefore, arbitrary and temporary though the institution was which denounced them, was enough to render them offensive to God, and to make them the procuring cause of a judicial retribution.

Here, then, are positive laws, and, by the breach of them, actual transgression. This brought the sinner under condemnation, and these demanded the execution upon him of his merited penalty. When, therefore, he was saved from the evils to which he had exposed himself, and was declared to be restored to guiltlessness in virtue of the immolation on his behalf of a sacrificial animal, there is no reasonable or even possible way in which we can view the slaughter of the victim but as a real expiation. The sword of justice was unsheathed and suspended over the transgressor's head; 'the lamb of his sin-offering' sprang forward and received the blow; and the interposition, in its empowering him to escape unhurt, left the devoted animal bleeding in his place. The various corporeal uncleannesses which were pronounced iniquitous and had made him obnoxious to judicial vengeance, were fully atoned for by the sacrifice, and the condemning influence of them neutralized immediately upon its being made; yet this was manifestly in consequence of the victim which was immolated on account of them having vicariously undergone their stipulated penalty. Previous to the sacrificial act, the leper, or the person otherwise ceremonially guilty, was expelled from the enjoyment of those pleasures, and privileges, and possessions to which one in a state of innocence had unrestricted access; and in this state of expulsion he would have permanently continued, had he not been purified from his sin, and released from the sentence under which it had laid him, by the aspersion of expiating blood. This, with the fact that he was restored to his

former situation as a necessary result of its being shed, shews with sufficient clearness the reality of the atonement which was made for him, the certainty of its having embodied a substitutionary endurance of his punishment, the power which it possessed of sacrificially effecting his redemption, and the point of view in which we are to regard the parallel which the scriptures institute between it and the death of Christ. The Levitical expiation was literal, involved a suffering for sin by substitution, and delivered the criminal from punishment by transferring it to another. The Redeemer's death must hence have been strictly piacular, the consequence of a legal imputation to him of the guilt of men, and the sacrificial source of their deliverance from wrath. The Aaronic sacrifice, on the one hand, met the demands of justice upon the leprous Israelite, and, by the shedding of blood, delivered him from all his civil disabilities; and the Saviour's sufferings, on the other, absorbed the penalty due to the moral iniquities of every sinner who believes, purge his conscience from dead works, and extricate him from the condemnation under which he would else have eternally been placed.

This is the light in which we are to view the apostle's comparison of the two sacrifices; it is the only way in which we can avoid throwing it into confusion; and it leads us to see in it conclusive proof of the expiatory nature of Christ's death, and an exhibition of the various excellencies in which it eclipses the atonement of the Jews. The Levitical sacrifice viewed man as the subject of a government which was symbolical in its nature, temporary in its duration, and arbitrary in its enactments; the Christian regards him purely as a moral agent placed under an administration whose laws are a transcript of God's moral character, whose authority is necessary and absolute, and which is presided over by the Divine Being in his rela-

tionships of the creator, the proprietor, and the moral governor of the universe. The one was the doing away of 'errors' which had their seat in the flesh, and were not intrinsically iniquitous ; the other is the extermination of sins which affect the heart, and which, in every intelligent being, and in every possible circumstance, are essentially criminal and condemnatory. The one was the averting of a punishment which included nothing more than legal and political disabilities, and which was confined, in the sphere of its infliction, to the world and to the peculiar situation of the Jews ; the other was the substitutionary endurance of a penalty which, when awarded to the person of the transgressor who merits it, involves the separation of the soul and the body, the execution of wrath immediately upon the mind, and the prolongation of tremendous mental agonies throughout a perpetual eternity. Hence, while both of them were real, and were, each in its peculiar way, fully efficient, the great disparity which exists between the governments, the sins, and the penalties with which they were respectively concerned, sufficiently accounts for the worthlessness of the former to man as a creature morally accountable, explains all the apparently depreciating language which is applied to it by Paul, and illustrates the peerless value and glory, when compared with it, of the death of the Redeemer.

There is a way, then, in which the Jewish sacrifices are proved to have been piacular ; and this does not refer to their merely typical prefiguration of a better atonement, but to their positive removal of what, in one sense, was actually sin. It is no objection to this, in the bearing which it has upon the proof of a reality in the expiation of Christ, to allege, from the fact of lepers and other ceremonially unclean individuals having been

compelled, in the face of the sacrificial provision, to remain for a season in a state of personal subjection to their incurred punishment, that they themselves, and not the victim which was slaughtered on their behalf, sustained the award of their defilements; nor is there any thing more than sophistry in arguing upon the same ground, that, had there been the efficacy in the prescribed sacrifices for which we contend, there is no imaginable reason why the making of them should have been proscribed till a certain number of hours or days after the commission or contraction of the offence, and for causing the offender to remain so long in a state of ritual condemnation. In this there is neither argument nor plausible objection; but, on the other hand, there is the adduction of a fact which only tends to throw an additional stream of light over the parallel between the Jewish atonement and the Christian. The latter as well as the former, for reasons into which it is not now our business to enquire, leaves the sinner in a state of full exposure to the evils which his apostacy has entailed; it sometimes permits him to waste away the greater part of his earthly existence without ever fairly discovering itself to his mind; and it does not, till his transition from the present state of being and entrance into heaven, encompass him with the plenitude of a perfect salvation. At the moment, it is true, when its healing energies are put forth, in a justifying act, upon his soul, it effects a complete and eternal obliteration of his guilt; yet, till the period of this redeeming revelation of itself, it never once interferes for his rescue from any of the thousand evils to which his sinfulness has subjected him, and, even after his justification, leaves him exposed to numerous and distressing sufferings so long as he is in the world. Previous to his belief in the gospel, he is in a state of as unqualified moral accursedness, as the ritual transgressor, before the

expiation of his impurities, was in one of unmingled exclusion from the privileges of ceremonial guiltlessness. In this respect, consequently, as well as in others, nothing can be seen but a rectilineal parallelism between the two atonements.

It may be said, indeed, that their agreement here is only a proof that what is alleged against the reality of the one, is in effect an evidence of the want of it in both,—that the objection from a delay in the making of the sacrifice in the case of a defiled Israelite, equally applies to a delay in transferring the results of the Christian expiation to a sinner,—that in respect to each of them, the delay originates a suspicion of the previous sufferings of the criminals having constituted the legal endurance of their respective penalties,—and that their merited punishment was hence not borne by the supposed victims, and would have been removed without as well as with their immolation. All this, however, in as far the Levitical atonement is concerned with it,—and it is merely upon the allegation respecting it that the whole of the objection proceeds,—is speaking directly in the teeth of plain and numerous statements of God's word. The question is not, *When* the ritual transgressor had the piacular animal presented on his behalf? nor, What were the *circumstances* which preceded the presentation? but simply, *When* the act of acquittal took place, was he or was he not released *on account of* the blood which was shed for him on the altar? This alone is the question; and the answer to it is at hand. ‘And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity; and he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering unto the priest; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his

ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him.* 'And the priest shall offer the sin-offering, and make an atonement for the leper that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness, and afterward he shall kill the burnt-offering, and the priest shall offer the burnt-offering and the meat-offering upon the altar, and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.† Nothing could more pointedly affirm than this does the invariable connexion between the sacrifice and the sinner's forgiveness. He is declared to have borne his iniquity on to the period when the priest made the appointed atonement on his behalf; and, lest we should imagine that his own previous penalties endured in consequence of his sin, had either exhausted or diminished the judicial wrath which was due to him, he is expressly said to have been forgiven as the result of the expiation. Without it, he is exhibited as a condemned and unpardoned transgressor; and with it, he is pronounced guiltless and pure. Such is the language of the pentateuch on the subject of every kind and modification of delinquency for which a sacrificial purgation was provided. It is universally declared to have existed until the victim's blood was poured out, and is always affirmed to have been removed entirely by the atonement. The argument, therefore, for vicarious punishment, still remains complete and unincumbered.

Were any thing additional requisite to enforce it, there are materials enough for the purpose in the various ceremonies by which the presentation of the sacrifices was accompanied. Some of these, as has often been remarked, are so exceedingly significant as to make it wonderful that the import of them should ever have been

* Lev. v. 17, 18.

† Lev. xiv. 19, 20.

mistaken. Such especially were the imposition of hands upon the head of the victim, and the confession over it of the sins which were to be expiated,—rites the most appropriate which can well be conceived for symbolizing the transference of guilt from a principal to his substitute, and which, without assuming this for their meaning, are perfectly inexplicable. They were practised in the case both of the great annual atonement when all the sacrificial power of the ritual was called into play for ceremonially saving the entire nation, and of the various sin and trespass offerings which were intended to expiate the offences of individual transgressors. In respect to the scape goats which were concerned with the former species of ministration, the transmission to them of sin by manuposition and confession, so far from being matter of conjecture, is placed beyond the remotest reach of doubt by the fact, that the person who led them away into the wilderness was held, in virtue of his contact with them, to have contracted pollution, and was not permitted to return to the camp till his defilement had been washed away by a purifying ablution. If the sin acknowledged over them had not been transferred, they would have remained, what they were before, animals destitute of every description of impurity, and the choicest and most legally sinless of the flock. They could have had no imaginable qualities by which the act of touching them would become morally contaminating; nor could they have been regarded in any other light than that of unmingled complacency. The fact, however, that, subsequent to the devoting of them to the altar and the confession over them of the people's iniquities, they were encompassed with an atmosphere of ritual noxiousness, manifestly proves that there had been imputation of guilt, and that, when they were led away into a land not inhabited, there was, in consequence of its penalty having been vicariously

endured, a justifying erasure of the nation's sin. The punishment, it is true, was not undergone by the scape goat itself, but it was sustained, nevertheless, by the goat of the Lord whose blood was shed on the altar. The slaughter of the one animal and the dismissal of the other, formed the two harmonizing and mutually dependent parts of an unique piacular process, the one constituting the substitutionary bearing of guilt, and the other its remission by the removal of it to a land of forgetfulness. In the infectiousness, therefore, of the goat over whose head the sin had been confessed, there is decided proof of its having become ritually polluted. Hence arises the certainty that guilt had been transferred in the confession, and that the vicarious endurance of its punishment was the death of the immolated victim.

Nor is this conclusion to be confined to the yearly expiation: it is to be extended to all the sacrifices which were piacular. The principle of the whole was one; and all, in being made for sin, must have had sin imputed. The imposition of hands could have had no more significance in reference to the scape goat, than in the other cases in which it was practised. Even when the ceremony was omitted,—as in the case of the holocausts whose blood was carried into the sanctuary while their bodies were consumed without the camp,—there was a translation of sin so manifest that, in the very burning of their carcase, ceremonial defilement was communicated to the officiate. After having performed the ministration, he could not be allowed an approach to God, or a free intercourse with the people, till he had been sacrificially purified from the pollution which he had caught. There is hence evidence in regard both to the animals over which iniquity was confessed, and to those in respect to which the rite was dispensed with, that, in their devotement to the altar, they became the substitutes of guilty Israelites.

and that, in their death, they suffered the penalty of those offences which they vicariously bore.

This, then, was the nature of the Jewish sacrifices; and it is in this view of them that they must be set over against the death of Christ in the comparison instituted by Paul. All that is true of them, in their bearing upon ritual transgressions, comes, in virtue of the parallel, to be affirmed of the Redeemer's sufferings, in reference to man's sins against the moral law. The Christian atonement holds the same place with the moral government of God, that the Levitical did with the ceremonial administration of Moses. As a necessary consequence, therefore, of their being compared, it follows that the sins of men were imputed to the Saviour, that his death was an undergoing by substitution of the penalty which was due to them, that all who believe are delivered from condemnation by his sacrifice, and that all the ministrations of the Jewish sanctuary were witnesses to the truth of these glorious doctrines.

It is, in fact, only by assuming the sufferings and death of Christ to have been strictly piacular, that they can be viewed as consistent with the equity of God, under whose government they were undergone. The causes which the antagonists of a true atonement assign for them are altogether inadequate. Neither the conferment upon him of the high rewards which he enjoys since his ascension to heaven, nor the confirmation of the system of moral truth which he taught, afford the shadow of a reason why, in order to his reception of the one or his accomplishment of the other, all those principles of a moral administration which apportion happiness and pain respectively to the guiltless and the guilty, should have been countervailed. Suffering, uniformly presupposes the existence of guilt in its subject

comes upon him as the judicial retribution of iniquity, and can never in itself be meritorious of divine favor. God's complacency can be secured by nothing but a perfect compliance with his will, by nothing but that uniform obedience to his commands which is rendered by a sinless moral agent. Nor can any part of this be constituted by subjection to suffering. Obedience necessarily assumes the promulgation of laws which mark out the materials of which it must consist; yet none of God's precepts enjoin the endurance of pain, or refer to it as a part of duty. Misery is spoken of, not in the commandments, but in the penal sanction of his law; and it can never be dispensed to any others of his subjects than those who are either personally or vicariously guilty. The procurement, therefore, of the special favor or of the high honors which were received by him at the close of his earthly career, could be neither the object nor the cause of our Lord's agonies.

The same thing is true of the supposed ratification of the truths which he promulgated. Although these had all been entirely new to the world, they were of such a nature as to make the confirmation of them by the death him who published them an utter impossibility. They were doctrines purely moral; and who ever heard or dreamed of a power to make moral truths firmer than they are in themselves by the influence of an individual's sufferings? Martyrdom is the only thing approaching to this of which we can form any conception; and, except in a case where the cause of it is a matter of mere testimony, this itself is of value only as it furnishes a solemn attestation to the sufferer's sincerity in holding the principles for his attachment to which he is brought to the stake. If he be martyred on account of his having affirmed and propagated a historical fact to which he was eye-witness, and his averments to the truth of which he will not retrench, his death is then, doubtless, a confirmation, in the fullest

point of view, of what he said and circulated ; but if, on the other hand, it be any system of abstract sentiments either of a moral, or theological, or philosophical description, all the worth of surrendering his existence rather than renounce it, is a proof of the high estimation in which it is held in his own mind. Yet this is totally different from clearing away imputations of falsehood from his creed, and can have no power to impart greater solidity to its doctrines than they intrinsically possess. Principles manifestly false have often been held at the expense of life, as well as those which are confessedly good. In each description of cases, there is equal evidence of the devoted man's sincerity ; and in neither does his death reach farther than evincing it.

Were it even conceded that, in reference to Christ, there was something beyond this, and that his crucifixion was both designed and calculated to ratify his doctrines, the concession would obviously strip him of an exclusiveness in his Saviourship, and would associate with him, in the possession of its prerogatives, and in the performance of its work, eleven of his apostles. These just as certainly, on this hypothesis, as himself, gave themselves up for the redemption of men ; they preached and disseminated the same truths ; they gave their necks to the block and their bodies to the fire on account of them ; their martyrdom, upon the same principle as his, exerted upon them a ratifying influence ; and they are, therefore, equally entitled to be trusted in as the Saviours of the world. Yet one of them asks, as if in astonishment at the stupidity which could mistake, or the impiety which could confound, the immense distinction between the object of their death and that of the Redeemer's, ' Was Paul crucified for you ? ' and again and again, in the word of God, is our Lord affirmed to have given, in a way altogether peculiar to himself, and in which he could have

had neither imitators nor co-adjutors, his life for the world. It was given for a purpose which the death of no other individual nor class of men could accomplish. Its object, consequently, was not the confirmation of a thing which could not be confirmed, and which, if it could, would have been ratified by others' as well as his; but was something of wholly another nature, and had concern with the piacular bearing away of human guilt.

Suffering, we have said, always presupposes the existence of sin. It must hence have been in one of only three ways that Christ was exposed to it,—either because he was himself a sinner, or in consequence of his having had upon him the sins of others by imputation, or in a total unconnectedness with moral accountability and transgression in any point of view whatever.

The first supposition is blasphemous; and is opposed to the plainest intimations of scripture. Whether we read the Bible's history of his life, or examine its descriptions of his character, we will discover that he was absolutely sinless. 'He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' 'He was without blemish, and without spot.' 'He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.' 'There was no fault found in this man.'

As to the idea of his agonies having had no real or immediate connexion with sin, it reflects the most fearful dishonor upon God, and derogates incalculably from the equity of his administration. How, in harmony with either goodness or rectitude, could he make a perfectly innocent being suffer? In no way assuredly but as the result of a previous transference to him of the iniquities of another. It is in vain to urge the case of the inferior animals, and to hold them up as examples of suffering where no guilt is supposed to exist. They are quite incapable of possessing either moral pravity or its oppo-

site. The question of their subjection to pain, although involved in sore and perplexing difficulties, bears no imaginable analogy to the question of exposure to wretchedness in a subject of moral agency. The government under which they are placed has none of the properties of a moral administration. With its principles we are, in reality, almost totally if not altogether unacquainted. It is on this account that the question of their present condition is so puzzling to our minds ; but it is just on this account also that we can so plainly and so safely pronounce it one which has no real similarity to that of an innocent moral agent's exposure to pain. A problem in morals is not to be solved by considerations drawn from a case with which morals have not and cannot have any concern.

How, then, we again ask, can God, in consistency with his benevolence and equity, inflict suffering upon a spotlessly holy being ? Such an infliction, where no iniquity has been either personally or vicariously contracted, would be a fatal interference with the dearest and most fundamental principles of his procedure towards his intelligent creatures. Innocence and perfect obedience would then be disjoined from the security which they afford for the continuation of unbroken felicity. The highest motives to a perseverance in them would hence be withdrawn, and all the authority and force of a penal sanction destroyed. Misery would be seen as dealt out to the pure as well as to the disobedient ; the presence or the absence of it would cease to distinguish those who enjoyed the divine favor and those by whom it had been forfeited ; no practical assurance could be given that each individual of an unfallen moral community might not, without the slightest contraction of depravity, be placed in the same situation with the sinless sufferer ; it would necessarily become a matter of comparative indif-

ference with all whether they obeyed or rebelled ; and hence would the very foundation of the government, in regard both to the authority of the ruler and to the well-being of the subjects, be completely overturned.

Where, besides, would be the justice of the dispensation? The sanctions of the law as certainly promise unqualified happiness to the obedient, as they denounce unmingled tribulation against the rebellious. Felicity is pledged as the uniform companion of holiness, and wretchedness is declared to be the retribution only of the sinful. This is the invariable principle which God has averred it his purpose to adopt as the rule of all his acting toward his moral creatures ; it forms the essence of that justice which it becomes him to exercise in governing the universe ; and it would be thoroughly set aside and practically annihilated, if pain were causlessly, or without reference to either personal or substitutionary guilt, inflicted upon a single intelligence. Such a hypothesis is perfectly reckless and untenable. Since, therefore, out of three suppositions, which are the only ones that can apply to the case of the Redeemer, both this and that which assumes him to have been himself a transgressor, are overturned by the clearest proofs of their falsehood, it follows, as a necessary conclusion, that that only is true which affirms him to have suffered in consequence of his having had vicariously reckoned to him the sins of others. 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.*' 'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes

* I Pct. ii, 24.

we are healed. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

After what has been ascertained respecting the nature of the Jewish sacrifices, we have a great variety of materials before us for proving the reality of Christ's atonement, besides those which are found either in the mere fact of his having been subjected to pain, or in the scope of Paul's argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews. A number of the same terms which are employed by Moses to denote the qualities and effects of immolations in the Levitical sanctuary, are applied, throughout the scriptures, to the death of the Redeemer. We have hence a sufficiency of matter for determining their import, and for settling the doctrine which is taught in the passages where they occur. Among them we may distinguish 'expiation,' 'reconciliation,' 'propitiation,' and 'redemption,' as those which have the most pointed bearing upon the subject, and each of which, as will immediately be seen, erects every text where it is found, into a separate proof of Christ's having endured, in his death, the penalty due to the sins of men.

The word 'expiate' does not, it is true, occur in the English version of the Bible; but this is entirely owing to the mis-judgment, in this particular instance, of the translators. What fully corresponds to it† is of frequent occurrence in the writings both of Moses and the Apostles, and in the former, is generally rendered 'atone,' and, in the latter, 'sanctify.' Its sense might be convincingly vindicated by an appeal to the Greek Classics where it is often to be found. Our purpose, however, will be satisfactorily answered, simply by placing two passages where

* Isa. liii 4, 6.

† ἀγιάζω or ἁγνίζω,

it exists in the ritual parallel with two in the New Testament to which it is introduced, and by giving to the original word in all of them an uniform translation. 'And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin-offering for atonement, and thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast *made an expiation upon it*.* 'And for an unclean person, they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of *expiation for sin*, and running water shall be put thereinto in a vessel, and a clean person shall sprinkle it upon the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; but the man that shall be unclean and not *expiated*, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation.† 'For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest for sin are burnt without the camp; wherefore Jesus also that he might *make expiation for the people* with his own blood, suffered without the gate.‡ 'For both he that *maketh expiation* and they for whom *expiation is made* are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren.§

Expiation is thus affirmed equally of the Redeemer's death, and of the Levitical sin-offerings, holocausts, and purgations by the ashes of the red heifer. All these have already been proved, in the general remarks made on the Jewish sacrifices, to have been piacular; and they are individually declared to have literally borne upon the removal of guilt in a passage which employs the very word 'expiate' in making the declaration. 'The blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer *made expiation* to the purifying of the flesh.'|| Their expiatory properties consisted of a power to take away, by the shed-

*Exod. xxix, 36. †Num. xix, 17, 19, 20. ‡Heb. xiii. 11, 12.

§ Heb. ii. 11, 12.

|| Heb. ix. 13.

ding of blood, the ceremonial sins of those on whose account they were sacrificed. When, therefore, the epithet by which they are descriptively designated is unqualifiedly applied to the blood of Jesus,—and applied to it in the course of the very comparison which is drawn between them; we can view it in no other way than as affirming his death to be possessed of exactly the same qualities, and to have been undergone ‘for the people’ expressly with the view of sacrificially averting from them the penalty which their iniquities have merited. This is the only inference which can be made from the averment that when his blood was poured out, the act constituted ‘an expiation.’

The same thing is true of the use which the scriptures make of the word ‘reconciliation.’ The application of this word to any transaction implies that the parties concerned in it have been in a state of previous alienation and mutual enmity. There must have been reasons, in the conduct of one or of both of them, in which the feeling productive of separation and of want of complacency has originated. It is in the subversion of these, either by an absolute destruction of them, or by the advancement of others which counterbalance and supplant them, that the act of reconciliation is accomplished. The opposition toward men which exists on the part of the Deity, is simply his holy and righteous wrath at human guilt, his determination to punish it, and his necessary destitution of all esteem and complacent regard for its subjects. The only way, therefore, in which mankind can be reconciled to him must be one in which there will be a removal, in a manner consistent with the penal sanction of his law, of the sinfulness which they have contracted and the condemnation under which they have been brought. As sin is the single cause of the alienation, the reconciliatory

work must solely occupy itself with its extermination,—and this altogether in a way of atonement for it by substitutionary suffering. It is, accordingly, always in immediate connexion with the Saviour's sufferings,—those sufferings which the Bible so often parallels with the immolation of the sacrificial victims under the law,—that he is declared to have effected it. 'And having made peace through the blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; and you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.*' 'If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.†' 'And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.‡'

The same thing is thus affirmed of the blood and death of the Redeemer which, in numberless places of the ritual, is predicated of the oblation of those animals to which iniquity had been reckoned, and whose sacrifice was an undergoing of its punishment. While it is hence necessarily implied that the guilt of men was transferred to Christ, and that he consequently suffered for it in his passion; sin, in virtue of this, is declared to be no longer imputed or, which is strictly synonymous, is affirmed to be henceforth removed from those who are reconciled to God by his death. This, therefore, is evidence that, whenever the work of reconciliation is ascribed to him,

* Col. i. 20, 21. † Rom. v. 10, 11. ‡ Cor. v. 18, 19.

there is an explicit declaration made that, in regard both to substitution and satisfaction, he was a sacrifice in the full and proper sense of the term.

This conclusion is still more apparent from the passages in which he is called 'a propitiation.' It would be endless to enumerate all the instances in which the original of this word * occurs in the law, and is employed to designate the peculiar effects of the Levitical sacrifices. It is within the truth to affirm that, in describing the expiatory qualities of the sin, trespass, burnt, and national offerings, it is used twice as frequently as all other words in conjunction, and that, in two cases in every three, its cognate is the verb which, in our version, is rendered 'to atone,' or 'to make atonement.' It seems to have been the vocable which was specially appropriated by Moses to express the consequences to a sinner of the substitution of a victim which had borne his guilt by imputation, and extirpated it by the endurance of its penalty. It is hence, when applied to the death of Christ, a word of such undoubted import and peculiar force, as to make the proof which it affords of the true piacularity of his sufferings wholly irresistible.

It occurs, in reference to his sufferings, once in the form of a verb, and three terms as a substantive. 'In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, *to propitiate him* respecting the sins of his people.' † It exists here as a verb, and lies in the centre of the phrase which is almost uniformly used to describe the sacrificial actions of the Levitical priests. The same language in which their immolation of bloody victims was expressed in the ritual, is hence employed to point out the nature of the sacerdotal performances of the Re-

* ἱλασμός or ἐξἱλασμός.

† Heb. ii. 17.

deemer. In giving himself up to crucifixion, therefore, he accomplished the same species of work which the Jewish priests effected when they slew the different sacrificial animals on the altar.

Regarded, accordingly, as the victim which, in propitiating the Deity, he offered up, he is repeatedly called 'a propitiation.' 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.* 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.† 'Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.‡ In the last of these passages, indeed, the original word properly signifies 'a propitiatory' or 'a mercy-seat;' but as its application to the Saviour, understand it in whatever way we choose, must be metaphorical, its literal import, according to metonymy, —the most appropriate figure which, in a case like this, we can conceive to be used,—is the same as that of the simple term. The mercy-seat was the place on which the expiatory blood was sprinkled by the high-priest, and, in harmony with a frequent custom of the inspired writers, it is by an easy trope put, in this instance of allusion to it, for the blood itself. We have before us, therefore, a variety of places in which Christ, in regard to the taking away of sin, and to his sacrificial character in the abstract, is denominated 'a propitiation.' Since, consequently, this is the appropriated epithet in the law for denoting proper atonement, such an appropriation of it to him must be viewed as indisputable evidence of the true piacularity of his sufferings.

* I John ii. 1, 2. † I John iv. 10. ‡ Rom. iii. 24.

All the three words 'expiation,' 'reconciliation,' and 'propitiation,' are destitute of figure; and, with a slight difference in the aspect in which they display it, they all literally teach the same truth. This makes the evidence which they furnish strictly unexceptionable. The same thing may not, perhaps, be, at first sight, said of the epithets 'ransom' and 'redemption;' yet if we find that the metaphor which they embody is explained by the scriptures themselves, and that the sentiment contained in them is reduced by the explanation to its plain and untropical form, the proof becomes as cogent and direct as if no figures had been used.

Now, not only is Christ, in many places which it is unnecessary to quote, said to have 'redeemed,' 'bought,' and 'purchased' sinners, and to have given himself a 'ransom' for men; but statements are also given of what constituted the act of redemption. It is declared to have been the payment of his own blood; this is called the price or the ransom money of the purchase; and the paying of it down is affirmed to have been synonymous with a sacrificial slaughter. 'Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* 'Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's.† The law is represented as having an ownership in the guilty; they have forfeited their lives to it by the breach of its precepts, and have become its property and prisoners; it has 'shut them all up under sin,' and chained them down with its malediction; it sternly refuses to yield them up or give them a moment's liberty without a thorough indemnification of the loss which their defection has occasioned; the

* I Pet. i. 18, 19. † I Cor. vi. 20. ‡ Gal. iii. 22.

amount which it demands for their deliverance is the sum of moral goodness which they have destroyed and of penal infliction which they merit; this, from the circumstances in which they are placed, cannot be paid by themselves,—it can be furnished only by the substitutionary sufferings and obedience of a sufficiently meritorious victim; and it was, therefore, by the death of Christ, viewed as a literal sacrifice for sin, that the act of redemption was performed.

‘To redeem’ is thus merely a figurative way of expressing the literal idea of making expiation. Hence, in the very verse in which the blood of Jesus is called a ransom price, he is himself denominated, in manifest allusion to the sacrifices under the law, ‘a lamb without blemish and without spot.’ The lambs which were immolated on the Levitical altar always required to be unblemished and spotless in body,—symbolical, as we shall afterwards see, of the moral purity requisite in an efficient moral sacrifice. When the Saviour, therefore, in a comparison of his sacrificial properties with theirs, is not only called ‘a lamb,’ but is averred to possess the qualities of an eligible sin-offering, there is not room for a moment’s hesitancy in concluding, that the effectiveness as well as the bare fact of his having vicariously borne away the sins of men, is explicitly taught by the metaphor of buying off a captive or a slave. In every one of the numberless passages in which this figure is employed as descriptive of his work, whether it speak of purchase, paying a price, redeeming, or giving a ransom, there thus exists a separate proof of the reality of the Christian atonement.

We have seen that, under the old economy, the forgiveness of ceremonial sin was so closely connected with the presentation of the victim which was sacrificed on account

of it, that 'without the shedding of its blood, there was no remission.' The sacrificial outpouring of blood so uniformly and indispensably preceded the act of pardon, that the existence of the one, in any supposed or recorded case, always argued the existence of the other. The only way of being extricated from punishment, was the transmission of the guilt which had entailed it to a substitute. Even, therefore, when the narrative of a pardon preserved utter silence upon the manner in which it had been obtained, there was a tacit, yet certain disclosure of the fact, that a proper atonement had been made for the transgressor.

This shews that, in addition to those statements which aver the moral sinner's deliverance from the curse of the law to have been effected by a bloody ransom, and to those in which an act of divine remission is affirmed to have been a consequence of Christ's death, all those which, though they be silent upon the immediate subject of sacrificing, teach the doctrine either of pure forgiveness through a mediatorship, or of justification,—a word which, in a most intelligible forensic allusion, is plainly designed to express with fulness the manner in which iniquity is remitted,—are, in reality, the materials of an unambiguous and substantial announcement of an actual expiation. They do not, it is true, overtly declare that such an atonement exists, but confine themselves to a mere publication of God's manifested mercy; yet, while they are supported by parallel declarations which exhibit a forgiving or justifying act in as inseparable an alliance with the death of Jesus, as the ritual does a Levitical remission with a previous sacrifice, they are all, without a solitary exception, to be held up as the credible witnesses of a genuine piacularity in the sufferings of the Saviour. 'God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now *justified*

by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*
 ‘To the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved in whom we have *redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*, according to the riches of his grace.’† ‘Unto him that loved us, and *washed us from our sins in his own blood*, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.’‡

Simple remission and a justifying act are thus interwoven in the closest manner with the sacrificial offering of Christ. This should be enough to convince every candid mind, and—since all parties who hold the inspiration of the New Testament scriptures freely acknowledge that, in some sense or other, salvation is obtainable only in virtue of the Saviour’s mediation,—it should be enough to convince *all*, that his death was truly piacular, that ‘his blood cleanseth from all sin,’ and that there is the same connexion between the shedding of it and the forgiveness of moral iniquity, that there was between the oblation of bulls and of goats and the removal of ceremonial transgression. ‘It is the blood which maketh atonement;’ it was this which accomplished a ritual sinner’s release from punishment under the law; and it is this, it equally appears, which effects a moral transgressor’s acquittal from condemnation. In the one case, it was confessedly expiatory; and, since the same qualities and results are affirmed of it, it must be as manifestly piacular in the other. Exhibited as it is, therefore, as the cause of a forensic deliverance from guilt, we are borne out in viewing not only those passages which verbally connect its aspersion with an act of pardon, but all those likewise in which forgiveness, justification, redemption, or salvation is traced in general language to the mediator—

* Rom. v. 8, 9. † Eph. i. 6, 7. Rev i. 5, 6.

rial work of Christ, as so many detached and conclusive proofs of both the fact and the efficiency of the atonement.

For the establishment of this doctrine, then, there have been advanced arguments, from the nature and design of the Levitical sacrifices,—the minute parallel which is drawn between them and the Redeemer's death in the epistle to the Hebrews,—the impossibility, without assuming their piacularity, of accounting for his sufferings in consistency with the justice and goodness of God, or with the principles and well-being of his moral government,—the import, as ascertained by the sense of the passages where they occur and corroborated by the use which is made of them in the ritual, of the words 'expiation,' 'reconciliation,' 'propitiation,' and 'redemption,'—and from repeated averments that pardon of sins and the justification of the sinner, directly accrue from the blood of Christ. To this accumulation of evidence, a vast addition might be made. When we remember, however, what the current language of scripture is upon the subject, and how it almost invariably identifies the doctrine with the very fact of his humiliation and passion; it is plain that an attempt to exhaust all the proof which God's word furnishes, would be an arduous and endless undertaking. 'He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this evil world.'* 'He was manifested to take away our sins.'† 'When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High.‡' 'For I have delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.§' 'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his

* Gal. i. 4. † I John iii. 5. ‡ Heb. i. 3. § I Cor. xv. 3.

name's sake.* 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.'† 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.‡ 'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy; and after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.§ 'He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.'|| 'As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.'¶ 'He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'** 'For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for a sin-offering, destroyed sin in the flesh.'†† 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.'‡‡ 'Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain for us, and hast redeemed us to God by the blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.'§§ 'For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that, whether we

* I John ii. 12. † Isa. liii. 10. ‡ Gal. iii. 13. § Dan. ix. 24, 26. || Rom. iv. 25. ¶ Rom. v. 18, 19. ** II Cor. v. 21. †† Rom. viii. 3. ‡‡ John i. 29. §§ Rev. v. 9.

wake or sleep, we should live together with him.* Christ gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.† 'But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.‡ 'For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit.'§ 'Ye are come to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.'|| 'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.'¶

Such is a specimen, and but a specimen, of phraseology which pervades the whole of God's testimony to the character and work of the Redeemer. It universally either overtly affirms or most obviously assumes the doctrine of his having made a true and literal atonement for sin. When, therefore, we view it in connexion with the evidence which has been previously adduced, we must feel ourselves constrained to acknowledge that the genuine piacularity of his death is not merely a truth but a master-tenet of the Bible. It is the grand basis on which the superstructure of gospel invitations, doctrines, and promises is reared, and forms the key-stone of the noble and glorious arch of divine truth which stretches between Genesis and Revelation. Without it, the multi-form and expatiative legislation of Moses would be a farrago of random and unmeaning institutes, the visions

* I Thess. v. 9, 10. † Tit. ii. 14. ‡ Gal. iv. 4, 5. § I Pet. iii. 18. || Heb. xii. 24. ¶ I Pet. iv. 1.

and predictions of the prophets would lose all their pathos and moral grandeur of description, and the glorified saints would have torne from them the sublime and only materials of their everlasting songs. It is the hope of ruined men, the wonder of adoring angels, and the vexation only of devils and the damned. The atonement wrenched the world from the grasp of Satan, and laid it anew at the feet of God. The feverish delirium of Time evaporates into reason in its presence, and the sturdy strength of Eternity will wax stronger through its influence. It is the glory of the gospel, the power of the cross, the crown and the royal robes of the ransomed. It is thy salvation, O my soul! 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, to give the knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light unto them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.'

SECT. II.

The various parts of the work of Atonement.

Expiation may more properly be called a work than an act. It is not an unique performance accomplished by a single effort, but includes a variety of successive actions; nor is it a process in which the same species of energy merely requires to be exerted with a sufficient number of

repetitions, but one whose different ingredients are diversified both in their respective materials, and in their individual design. All these are mutually dependent, and, when united in the manner which sacrificial efficacy renders requisite, are necessarily subservient to one another, and conjunctly constitute a complete and harmonious whole; and yet, when they are separately viewed, each of them must possess its own distinct and appropriate qualities, and must have the detached perfection which will accomplish the specific object of the department which it fills.

Under the law, piacular rites varied in some of their minute materials according to the nature of the victim which was presented, and to the place which its immolation held in the complex services of the sanctuary; yet, in all their leading features, they were the same in every description of piacular sacrifice which was made. In presentations on account of mere individual transgressions, they assumed a modified and comparatively imperfect form. It was only in those which bore upon the guilt of the whole nation, and in the services of which the personal agency of the high-priest was exerted, that they sustained the full plenitude of their perfectness. In these, there were brought together, in the most appropriate and imposing manner, all the materials of the most complete and majestic expiation. Although every essential ingredient which they possessed was substantially found in all the lesser atonements of the daily ministration, it was only in them,—in the splendid grandeur in which they were embosomed, in the holiday of the entire nation's encompassment of the Temple, in the pompous and orderly detail of their successive sacrificial actions, in the solemn pontifical entrance to the Holiest, and in the divine suffusion of the cloud of glory throughout the sanctuary,—that the full import, the completest effectiveness, and the vari-

ous departments of a piacular work, were most advantageously exhibited.

It was in the different actions of the high-priest in the making of these annual sacrifices that the amplest prefiguration was made of the Christian atonement; it is principally with these that the New Testament scriptures compare it for the purpose of illustrating its nature; and it is, therefore, in a chief and almost exclusive way to them that we must be confined in erecting way-marks for our enquiry into the particulars of which the expiation of Christ was composed. In referring to them, however, there is no necessity to seize with eagerness, or even to seize at all, upon every subordinate circumstance which attended them; nor is it proper to imagine that all the lesser shades of the portraiture which they displayed were essential to the adequate representation of a complete atonement,—an imagination which is dissipated by the fact, that, in the more private officiations of the Holy Place, some of them were entirely omitted. It is enough, therefore, that we fix our attention upon those of them which a collation of statements from the Old and New Testament scriptures shews to have been essential, and that, along with the writer to the Hebrews, we sum them up in the consecration of the victim, the transmission to it of the sins which it was appointed to expiate, the immolation of it on the altar, the immediate act of offering it to God, and the aspersion of its blood in the Holiest of all. These, we apprehend, are all constituent parts of a work of expiation, and when combined in the order in which we have arranged them, constituted a perfect process of atonement.

I. The first of them,—*the consecration of the sacrificial victim*,—is not, it is true, expressly noticed by Paul; yet it is evidently assumed in all the places where the qualifications of the devoted animals are pointed out, or where

mention is made of their slaughter. It consisted in a selection and separation of them from the flock, in their adduction to the altar, and in a solemn dedication of them to God. In order to this, there were likewise necessary, on the part of the offerer, both a willingness and an intention to give them freely and fully up to the divine service. These formed the primary movement of the sacrificial doings which ensured the acceptableness and efficiency of presenting them. It is to them the Apostle refers, when, in a figurative allusion to the Jewish offerings, he affirms, respecting the benevolence of the faithful, that, 'if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*' The voluntary determination of devotement to God is thus the essence of the metaphorical sacrifices of believers,—the radical material without which all the other ingredients of the offering would be unavailing. It was this, upon the same principle, which was demanded in the literal ministrations of the Levites, as indispensable to either the lawfulness or the success of every piacular immolation. It constituted, in fact, the very substance of the victim's consecration. The deeds of selection, separation, and adduction, were, when properly viewed, only its outward expressions. The sum, therefore, of a sacrificial animal's legal sanctification, or of its being rightly set apart to the work of the sanctuary, was a total withdrawment of it from every secular purpose, a renunciation of all right to it as an article of property, and an unreserved surrender of it to Jehovah. After this, it was regarded as 'holy to the Lord,' and the first act of the piacular process was performed.

In the Christian atonement, this ingredient had an undoubted existence. 'When he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body

* 2 Cor. viii. 12.

hast thou prepared me; in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God. Above, when he said, sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offering, and offering for sin, thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which are offered by the law, then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we have expiation made for us through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

In this quotation, there are citations made from the prophetic psalms; and these are shewn not only to apply strictly to the Redeemer, but also to have a reference to him exclusively as a sacrifice. His humanity was as requisite to him as a Priest, as it was indispensable to him as a sin-offering; yet it is wholly in its relation to him in his sacrificial capacity that affirmation is here made of the necessity of his assuming it. In respect to it, he is compared to the piacular animals of the Jews; and, in the act of uniting it with his Godhead, he is averred to have put himself in the situation, and invested himself with the character, of an expiatory victim. While, in the susception of manhood, he is repeatedly affirmed to have been actuated by an untrammelled choice, and is declared to have experienced a high delight in devoting himself, in his incarnation, to a consumption on the altar; it is roundly averred that the voluntariness of the surrender was the hinge on which the genuineness and the worth of his expiation primarily turned. Had he been driven to the vale of tears or to the cross by compulsion, there could have been no free-will devotement of himself as a victim, no sacrificial consecration for the service of the sanctuary,

* Heb. x. 5,—10.

and no piacularity in his death. Since, however, the making of himself of no reputation, the taking upon him of the form of a servant, and the being found in fashion as a man, were actions altogether free; they constituted a perfect piacular sanctification, made the first step in his work of atonement unobjectionable, and exerted a suitably modifying influence upon the succeeding parts of the expiatory ministration. In consequence, therefore, of his '*will*,' or of the voluntary nature of the transaction in which manhood and a sacrificial character were assumed by him, 'we have expiation made for us through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.'

In regard, consequently, to the inward willingness in which the essence of a victim's consecration consists, there was a full possession of it by the Saviour; and with respect to the outward manifestations of it, or the overt acts of devotement to which it leads, they are to be found, in their bearing upon his general sufferings through life, in the very fact and manner of his incarnation, and, in their reference to the more special pains of his passion, in the circumstances which attended both his last journey to Jerusalem, and the different events that immediately preceded his crucifixion. As, notwithstanding the numerous indignities and mental depressions to which he had been exposed during the previous period of his humiliation, and to which he had freely given himself up in the act of his advent from heaven, the chief and avowed immolation of himself took place at Gethsemane and the place of skulls; so, the facts of his leaving Galilee and going up to the feast at a time when he knew that he would be put to death, of his telling the traitor to go out and do quickly the deed of treachery, of his delivering himself with neither resistance nor grudging to the banditti in the garden, and of his allowing himself, without the remotest attempt at self-vindication, to be condemned

by Pilate and hurried away to Calvary by the rabble, are, in a special way, to be regarded as the separation of himself from the world, the setting of himself apart to the sufferings of expiation, the adduction of himself to the place of slaughter, and the binding of himself with cords to the horns of the altar. 'Then he took unto him the twelve and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on, and they shall scourge him, and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again.*

He thus went up, not only with a complete foreknowledge of every event which should befall him, but with the pointed purpose of subjecting himself to all the agonies and ignominies which awaited him, of being virtually his own executioner in the infliction of the death which was meditated against him, and of fulfilling with his own agency and consent whatever had been predicted respecting the sore distresses of his peculiar work. When, under the influence of this spirit, he had gone up to Jerusalem, brought himself as it were to the door of the Tabernacle, and surveyed the gloomy and appalling preparations which were going forward among the reckless mob for his crucifixion; he then, with the sable apparatus of death before his mind, with the amplest power, if he had willed to exert it, of blasting it into annihilation, and in a direct address to his Father, expressed his voluntary determination to yield himself up with his own hands, and to pour out 'his soul as an offering for sin.' 'And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. As thou hast sent me into the

* Luke xviii. 31,—33.

world, even so have I also sent them into the world, And for their sakes *I devote myself as a piacular victim*, that they also may be sanctified through the truth.*

Language stronger or more pointed than this could not have been found for conveying a fixed and determined idea of self-surrender to sufferings; nor could circumstances have been arranged in which the utterance of it could with more solemnity or propriety have been made. The purpose was expressed in the hearing of his disciples, in a pathetic appeal by prayer to Jehovah, and in the vicinity of the spot which God had marked out as the place in which the sins of the world should be expiated. Yet, definitive as it then was, and effective in its giving reality and worth to the first act of his atonement, the Saviour thought it not unnecessary to repeat it. Rising immediately at the close of the prayer in which he had uttered it, passing with his disciples over the brook Cedron, and forthwith laying himself open to the begun execution upon his soul of the penalty of men's sins, he was not shaken in his resolution by the tremendous burden of wrath which pressed from him 'as it were great drops of blood;' but, undergoing an unutterable exertion which made his soul sorrowful even unto death, feeling sorely amazed and very heavy under the incipient outpourings of the curse, and stedfastly anticipating the still more dreadful inflictions of it which were before him, he anew declared to God his perfect readiness to sustain the punishment of man till the last ingredient of guilt should be atoned for. 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done.'† He had power to call legions of angels to his rescue from the fearful tragedy which followed; and in fifty ways

* John xvii. 11, 18, 19. † Matt. xxvi. 42.

might he have confounded all the schemes of his enemies, and annihilated both their rage and their persons. They were, however, only instruments employed by himself for accomplishing the purposes of his self-devotement. As a priest, he used them for inflicting the sufferings and death which, as a sacrifice, he had been consecrated to undergo. 'No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father.'*

With respect, therefore, to the first act in a work of expiation,—the proper consecration of the victim,—the Christian atonement is complete. That which, in the order of the Jewish ministrations, succeeds it, and which is no less indispensable to the genuine piacularity of the service, is

II. *The transference of guilt from the sinner to the substitute.*

This act, as we formerly observed, was, in given cases, performed under the law with an accompaniment of imposition of hands. It was so with all the burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, and trespass-offerings of individuals, when the animal was a quadruped, and likewise with the scape-goat which, along with the goat of the Lord, constituted the annual atonement for the whole nation. In all the former, the ceremony was gone through by the person on whose account the sacrifice was made; and, in the latter, it was performed by the high-priest as the representative of the Israelitish people.

This gives origin to the idea that what was more immediately embodied in the act of manuposition, was a transference of sin merely by the transgressor's confession

* John x. 18.

of it, and that, in addition to this, there entered into a full and proper imputation, an abstract or legal transmission, consisting in the law's recognition of the fitness of the victim, and in its acceptance of its death as an equivalent for the original sinner's personal penalty. This idea is vindicated by the very nature of a translation of guilt,—a transaction which does not and cannot extract absolute moral qualities from one individual, and, by either a partial or a total transfusion, incorporate them with the soul of another, but which merely places the person of the substitute in the situation which belongs to the principal, reckons him, in point of law, amenable for the offences of the sinner, and treats him as though they had been committed by himself. More than this, it does not necessarily imply; and this it manifestly must, in every case, include.

It is hence apparent that nothing but the immediate efficacy of the expiatory act, the assent, on the part of the man on whose account it was accomplished, to the rectitude and desirableness of its being effected, and the wish felt and expressed by him for its interference on his behalf, drew forth the injunction that, upon the head of every victim which had respect only to an individual, there should, with a concomitant act of confession, be invariably placed the hands of the transgressor. The substantial and, in fact, the properly legal ingredient of the imputation was that which consisted of the law's recognition and acceptance of the vicarious animal,—acts which, at the moment of their performance, placed the victim in the attitude of its amenability, viewed it as legally chargeable with the iniquity which it was destined to expiate, and henceforth ensured its being treated as if it had been a personal offender. When, along with this, there was a hearty acknowledgment of the guilt by the sinner, and the exercise, in his mind of an expecting de-

pendence upon the sacrifice for the clearing away from him of his sin, the only additional quality of the transaction was, not any inherent consolidation or increase of the moral transference, but merely the certainty of his being released from condemnation contemporaneously with the completion of the service.

In the sacrifices for the whole congregation, in none of which the rite was observed, the omission of manipulation was doubtless occasioned by just the opposite principle,—by the impossibility, except on the day of annual atonement when there was a national convention for the very purpose of obtaining sacrificial remission, of ascertaining whether there was in the minds of the people an acquiescence in the offering, and of drawing from them a confession of the numberless sins for the doing away of which a holocaust was presented, and by the consequent and strong improbability, on account of individual acts of iniquity for the removal of which specific sacrifices were enjoined and which through negligence or impiety might nevertheless have remained unexpiated, of conveying, at the close of the ministration, the piacular results of it to all the multitude for whom, in a congregated capacity, it had been accomplished. What was necessary, from an adventitious circumstance, in one case, was dispensed with, from the absence of it, in another. An individual delinquent came voluntarily forward, and, in the consciousness of guilt with respect to some specific action, sought for an atonement. It hence became requisite in order to his speedily experiencing the rescue which he desired, that he should confess, with his hands upon the victim's head, the sin which he had perpetrated. When the sacrifice, however, was of a kind for which no solicitation, on the part of those for whom it was made, had been expressed, when it was the fruit exclusively of the divine legislator's appointment, and when the piacular effects of it were not

necessarily transferred to all the members of the congregation, and were left to be availed of and appropriated by them according to their individual convictions of their need of them, and to their private confession of sins which they were calculated to remove; there was then no necessity for imposition of hands, and it was enough that there existed the abstract and essential imputation of legal recognition, acceptance, and substitution. It was this kind of sacrifice which, next to the services of the yearly expiation, typified, in the most eminent manner, the offering of Christ;* and in it the transference of guilt was as complete as it was in those in the making of which the ceremony of manuposition was observed. The animals employed in it took the place, legally assumed the character, and fully endured the penalty of the sinners. The moment of their being empowered or necessitated to do this was that in which, subsequent to their selection and separation, they were pronounced by the law fit and accepted substitutes. At this moment, therefore, there was effected that transference of amenability to the demands of justice and the penal sanction of the law, of which a transmission of guilt essentially consists.

The nature of imputation is thus, we think, exceedingly plain. It will hence be seen that the work of a priest, in regard to it, is simply to ascertain, when he devotes his victim, that it is possessed of the qualifications which God has required of it, and that there is a consequent acceptance, on the part of the law, of its substitution.

In discharging this part of their duty, the Levites needed only to examine first the statute-book and then the animal to be offered; and, if they found that there

* Heb. x. 11, 12.

clear for his going forward to the performance of the next step in the expiatory work,—

III. *The immolation of the victim on the altar.*

Slaughter, or shedding of blood is an essential part of every atonement. Without it, there can be no remission, just because there can be no proper expiation. All the piacular victims, accordingly, which were sacrificed under the law, were slain previously to their being directly offered to God. 'For where a covenant is, there must also of necessity be the death of the victim; for since a covenant has, in no respect, any force during the victim's life, it must be ratified upon its death. Hence, not even the first covenant was established without blood. And, on this account, Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressors who were under the first covenant, they who are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*'

While, however, the Redeemer, in common with the piacular victims of the Mosiac dispensation, 'became obedient to death,' and while the loss of life is to be regarded as a principal and altogether indispensable ingredient of an atonement, we are not to imagine that his immolation consisted in the mere act of his crucifixion. Amongst the Levites, it is true, nothing was expiatory which transpired between the act of substitution in the transference of guilt, and the act of immolation in the maceration of the sacrificial animal; yet this arose entirely from the nature of the ceremonial penalty which was endured, and from the consequent circumstances of the substitute which underwent it.

The punishment which was annexed to a breach of the

* Heb. ix. 16,—18, 15.

Levitical law, did not, like that which is appended to the contraction of abstract moral guilt, include a compassment with mental and physical mischief precursory to the actual separation of mind and body, but consisted entirely in 'cutting off the soul that sinned from among the people;' nor did a Jewish atonement, like one which has to do with the confirmation of the penal sanction of the moral law, which is concerned with the vindication of the infinite purity and justice of God as the moral governor of the universe, which undertakes once for all to 'magnify the law, and make it honorable,' and which, as the necessary consequence of all this, has as certain a prospective bearing upon the moral renovation of the sinner, as it has a sure immediate one upon his deliverance from wrath, require, in addition to the passive endurance of a judicial retribution, to embody the execution of an active and a complete obedience to positive commands. It had, on the other hand, no reference whatever to the transgressor's condition or conduct beyond the individual iniquity which was immediately to be expiated; and, leaving him to be extricated from future sins by piacular ministrations as frequent and numerous as his acts of delinquency, it occupied itself with absorbing the mere insulated penalty of the specific transgression for the removal of which it was particularly made. The very genius of the economy demanded a new expiation for every separate and successive offence. Even the national sacrifices themselves, it required, on account of continual repetitions in the violations of the law, to be annually renewed. As, therefore, it was a mere detached iniquity, or at most a given set of accumulated sins for which reconciliation was made, and as the punishment which they merited was dealt out in numerical and independent inflictions, had no concern either with an individual's whole career of acting, or with the general and abstract ratification of a law, and was in

itself a mere political death unaccompanied with previous or subsequent ingredients of retribution; nothing more was requisite in the immolatory department of an expiation, than the simple killing of the sacrificial animal.

It was different, however, with Christ. From the oneness and conclusiveness of his sacrifice, from the immense range of objects which it had to accomplish, from its having had to deal with the moral administration of God, from its necessarily affecting as much the moral renovation of man as his forensic acquittal from condemnation, and from its having had to absorb a punishment which, while it spends its force chiefly upon the mind and effects a separation of the soul and the body, lets loose a previous train of physical and mental evils upon the sinner; his immolation required, along with actual death, to embrace a preceding course, both of subjection to suffering, and of active and unspotted compliance with the preceptive requisitions of the law.

In any other capacity than that of a placular victim, there was no possibility, consistently with his relationships and prerogatives as the Supreme God, of his being 'made under a law' which had been promulgated by himself, and which forms a rule of acting exclusively to created moral agents. Connected with his purely divine character, there was nothing which could, in the remotest way, lead to his assumption of manhood, or which, when human nature was actually assumed by him, could induce his accountability to a system of precepts and sanctions of which he was himself both the author and the administrator. It was solely in his susception of sacrificial attributes, that the necessity for his incarnation had its origin. He was 'sent in the likeness of sinful flesh,' just because he became, at the same time, an offering for sin.* Since, con-

* Rom. viii. 3.

sequently, his being 'made of a woman,' and his being 'made under the law,' are closely interwoven in the divine word, and are affirmed to have had equal connexion with his work of redeeming men from the curse,* it must be obvious that the latter in its having empowered him to obey, as well as the former, in its having given him a capacity to suffer, was an indispensable prerequisite to his performance of a work of expiation for men. The very fact of his obedience,—embedded, as it was, in his substitutionary, and not in his properly personal history,—firmly argues the identification of his actively obediential with his abstractly sacrificial work. But for this he could not have 'become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.'†

Now, just as his active obedience must have virtually commenced at his birth, or, which amounts to the same thing, at the period of his subjection to the law, so must his piacular sufferings which, along with his fulfilment of all righteousness, constituted, it appears, the immolatory part of his sacrifice, have been commensurate, in their duration, with his entire life-time on earth. The victim's devotement, and the transmission to it of the guilt to be expiated, are, it is true, steps in a process of atonement which precede the act of immolation; but these, we saw although in a more eminent and overt way accomplished immediately before his crucifixion, were in reality substantially performed at his incarnation. The fact therefore of their having been gone through simultaneously with his advent to the world, is itself a proof that he began to immolate himself at the time when the first pain which he felt was inflicted. From the necessary inseparability of suffering from sin either original or transferred, there was an insurmountable impossibility in the way of his un-

* Gal. iv. 4, 5.

† Rom. x. 4.

dergoing any pain whatever until there had been reckoned to him the iniquities which he was to take away. These, however, had been imputed in the very act of his coming down from heaven. Hence, since it was on account of them that he endured the first as well as the last pang which he underwent, his immolation must have included all the sufferings which were sprinkled on his pathway from the manger to the cross.

His *becoming* poor,—synonymous with his humiliation, with the want of moral grandeur in the scene of the manifestations of his moral presence, and with his susception of the form of a despised and ill-treated servant,—was as strictly for our sakes,—and that, doubtless by way of expiating sin and enduring the wrath which we had merited,—as either his *continuing* poor during life, or his consummation of his poverty in the ignominies and agonies of the place of skulls. His hunger, thirst, and weariness, his insults from enemies, ingratitude from friends, struggles with evil spirits, and all the other numberless and nameless mischiefs which assailed him between his birth and his death, are often as a whole, and without any discoverable division of them into two distinct classes, declared in the divine word to have been the combined materials of his vicarious punishment, and are all, and that sometimes without even a specification of his death or any distant or immediate allusion to it, spoken of as the sacrificial source whence pardon flows to the guilty. ‘Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.’* ‘Behold my servant shall deal prudently; he

* Isa. liii. 4, 5.

shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; so shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him; for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider.*

Still, however, as his more emphatic devotement of himself took place just before 'the decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem,' so, notwithstanding the inclusion of all his previous sufferings in his atonement, the principal materials of his immolation were his agony in the garden, and his death on the cross. This is manifest from all the many statements which connect redemption, remission, justification, and salvation directly with his blood or crucifixion. It is the blood which conclusively makes expiation; and this, in the proper sense of the words, was not shed till it was strained through his pores in Gethsemane, and drawn from his heart and his side upon Calvary. It was then that, in a special and tremendous manner, there was an outpouring of divine wrath upon his soul; it was then that the hour of the power of darkness emptied upon him its vial of burning anger; and it was then that he drank the cup of gall and trembling to the dregs. And just as the master-pungency of judicial retribution was then realized by him, it was eminently at that dismal period, that 'he made his soul an offering for sin,' and immolated himself on the altar. His agony and death, therefore, completed the third part of his piacular work. It hence, devolved upon him, when he had undergone them, or rather while he actually underwent them,

* Isa. lii. 13—15.

IV. *To offer himself directly to God.*

This act, which came next in order in the process of atonement, constituted, in the strict sense of the phrase, his oblation. It was always, in the Jewish sanctuary, performed subsequently to the victim's death, and consisted in the sprinkling or pouring of its blood upon the appointed parts of the altar, and in the consumption upon it of the fat and other principal parts which were not allotted to the Levites. In many passages of the ritual, indeed, the entire animal is spoken of as having been offered when it was brought alive to the door of the tabernacle. In these, however, the term 'offering' or 'oblation' occurs quite in a general signification, and, if restricted, is to be understood as synonymous with 'devotement' or 'consecration.' It was only as applied to the blood, fat, and other parts which were thoroughly appropriated to God, that it designated that particular ingredient of atonement which, in the order of time, succeeded immolation.

The blood, on account of its containing the life, was the substantially peculiar material of the victim; and as it was not with this but with the lamb or bullock as a whole, that an interference was made in the act of slaughter, there existed a necessity for another and a separate deed in which this specifically should be presented. The animal had, in its separation from the flock and adduction to the sanctuary, been offered to God as a substitute, and likewise, in a prospective way, as a sacrifice; but it was not till it had actually been slain, either that it could be looked upon as positively sacrificial, or that reference could be made to it as having been in reality subjected to the vicarious endurance of punishment. It was formerly devoted to the service of the altar with the mere design of its making expiation; and

its blood now required to be presented as the actual material of the promised atonement. In its immolation, the peculiar ingredient had been extracted; and, in its oblation, this was laid at the feet of the Deity. If, after the slaughter had been accomplished, the blood had been either wasted and allowed to run at large, or not carefully collected and expressly given to God, there would obviously have been a complete disannulling of all the preceding parts of the propitiatory process. The very rallying point of the ministration would have been destroyed; and nothing would have followed but confusion and discomfiture. The necessity for an oblation of blood succeeding immolation is thus abundantly apparent. In none, therefore, of the many expiatory sacrifices of the Jews was it ever omitted.

While, however, this was as indispensable in the case of the Redeemer as it was in that of the victims under the law, there was an essential difference in regard to the subsequence of it to the yielding up of life. What made the priority of death to oblation inevitable with them, was not a succession in order originating in the intrinsic relationship of the things themselves, but the physical impossibility of the priest's extracting the blood without, at the same time, taking away the life. If we could suppose it possible that, in any case, he could have put himself in possession of it, and could have poured it out or sprinkled it, while, by some excitement which we might not be able to define, the animal still retained its being, and only expired contemporaneously with the act of aspersion, there would have been nothing in this which was in the slightest calculated to invalidate the efficiency, or to dilute the virtue of the atonement.

No such thing, however, could take place with the Levites. Yet, unless we admit that oblation might have been delayed till three days after death,—a sup

which none, we imagine, will relish,—the very same physical cause which created the impossibility in reference to them, operated in precisely the opposite direction with regard to our Lord. In his mediatorial person, or in the union of his divine and human natures, he was the priest who officiated as well as the sacrifice which suffered. As therefore, a complete interference was made with this union by the separation of his soul and body on the Cross, as the disjunction of these suspended the existence of his manhood in its proper and organized form, as this suspension made it unimaginable that, during the period of its continuance, humanity, in the strict sense of the word, remained united to the divinity, and as he did not, consequently, between his crucifixion and his resurrection, truly exist in his mediatorial capacity in general, or in his sacerdotal character in particular; we are compelled to believe either that he offered himself to God before he expired, or that this was not done by him till after he rose from the dead.

The former part of this alternative is the most rational in itself, and is extensively supported by direct statements of the divine word. ‘Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God.’* ‘Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.’† In these, and in other passages of the same nature, his offering himself as a sacrifice to his Father is evidently, from the scope of their respective contexts, identified with his death; not that his immolation and his oblation are to be viewed as abstractly synonymous, but because in the one and therefore contemporaneously with it, the other was accomplished.

At the very time that his blood was ebbing from his

* Heb. ix. 14.

† Eph. v. 2.

heart as the sacrifice, he was actively engaged, as the priest, in presenting it to the Deity. He needed not to wait till it had all been shed; but in the very act of shedding it, he virtually poured it round the altar. His last deed before his dissolution, was the commitment of his soul,—that soul which he was then pouring out as an offering for sin, and upon which had been executed all the sore judicial inflictions which he had vicariously undergone,—into the hands of his Father. In that very act, his life was extinguished. As, consequently, the blood of a Levitical victim was given to God in preference to the other parts of the animal, purely because it was the seat or constituent of life, the fact of Christ's having finished his immolation by the deed of surrendering his soul to the Deity, is decisive proof that his oblation of himself was accomplished in his death.

This, then, was the completion of all the departments of his piacular work which were executed on earth. In order, therefore, to the realization of its grand and saving results by those for whom it was performed, he only required further

V. To enter Heaven, and purify it with his blood.

This finishing act of his expiation was not rendered necessary by the abstract nature of his work itself, but by the peculiar way in which the effects of it have respect to our race. These not only embody the remission of sins, and a consequent release from condemnation; but they likewise include a raising of men to the possession of God's positive favor, and an admission of them into celestial society and enjoyments. Had they, however, looked no farther than a mere extrication of sinners from guilt,—had the Redeemer's atonement been wholly, in the strictest sense of the word, piacular, and altogether

exclusive of propitiatory qualities,—had it in no shape concerned itself with the elevation of men to the heavenly world; it would have been completed by his mere endurance of the vicarious penalty, and the oblation of his blood which accompanied his death. Hence, in reference to perfect satisfaction to the demands of the law, and to the thorough bearing away of its curse, it is affirmed of him that, prior to his ascension to the right hand of his Father, ‘he purged our sins,’* ‘obtained eternal redemption for us,’† ‘bare our sins in his own body on the tree,’‡ and ‘reconciled us to God by his death;’§ and, in harmony with all this, he himself, in the very act of offering up his blood on the Cross, and, in allusion to the cup which had been given him to drink|| at the time of his particular sacrificial devotement, cried with a loud voice, ‘It is finished.’¶

Those sacrifices, under the Jewish economy, which fell short of accomplishing a proper propitiation, and which aimed at nothing more than a mere deliverance of the transgressor from guilt, were not, like others which in their nature and design more fully resembled that of Christ, enjoined to be made in the inner sanctuary, but only in the outer courts; nor was it necessary, since they had not the same lofty object, and were not invested with the same degree of excellence as those which both atoned and propitiated, that an equal scrupulosity should exist in regard to the qualifications of the persons by whom they were offered. While none but those priests who had kept the charge of the sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray, were eligible to the ministration of consuming the blood and the fat, or of presenting sacrifices which were made in the holy place; others, who

* Heb. i. 3. † Heb. ix. 12. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 24. § Rom. v. 10.
|| John xviii. 11. ¶ John xix. 30.

had been less faithful, and who had erred in common with the people, were not objected against as fit enough officiates in slaying the offerings which were slaughtered in the court of the tabernacle.* There was an intrinsic and sacrificial worth in the former class of victims, of which the latter were comparatively destitute,—a worth which consisted in the wider compass of object and efficacy which they embraced, and which therefore demanded the officiation, in respect to them, of only the most unexceptionable of the priests,—and a worth, besides, all whose superiority and peculiar materials originated in the single fact, that, in contra-distinction to those which were offered without, the sacrifices which possessed them were at once piacular and propitiatory, and consequently had their blood either partially sprinkled by the common priests on the vail of the Temple toward the Shechinah, or carried by the High Priest, on the day of annual atonement, into the Holiest of all, and presented by him immediately before the mercy-seat.

There is thus a distinction to be made between an expiation which is confined solely to the removal of guilt from the sinner, and one which, in addition to this, is designed to open the way for a conferment upon him of positive blessings and privileges, to restore him to the fullest possession of his sovereign's gracious regards, and to transplant him entirely and for ever from a scene of suffering and moral degradation, to a state of pure and exalted felicity, and of continual fellowship with God. Now it was just because the latter of these was the kind of atonement which was accomplished by the Redeemer,—because its object was, not only to neutralize the effects of the apostacy, but likewise to introduce mankind to the celestial presence of the Deity, and to make them eternal

* Ezek. xliv. 9—16.

sharers of the glory connected with sitting on the throne which Christ occupies as the reward of his mediatorial triumphs,* that there existed a necessity, in order to the perfecting of his piacular work, for his entering into heaven, and there presenting himself as a sacrificed victim to his Father. 'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with the blood of calves and of goats, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these; for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.†' 'For he being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.‡'

Had the earthly Holiest been entered by the Jewish High Priest without the blood of a suitable sacrifice, by which satisfaction, on behalf of the nation, had previously been made, there would have been, both a pollution of itself, and the erection of an insuperable barrier in the way of the people's receiving those communications of divine favor, which were symbolized by the suffusion and expansion of the cloud of glory throughout the whole sanctuary. The nation had been shut out both from this favor itself, and from the scene of its immediate manifestation, by the commission of iniquity against God; and, as the High Priest acted in the capacity of their representative, and, in his public character, was held in law to be implicated in their accountability, his appearance within the veil, had it been unaccompanied with the blood of propitiation, would have been a daring affront to the

* Rev. iii. 21. † Heb. ix. 23, 24. ‡ Heb. ix. 11, 12.

purity and justice of the divine lawgiver, and would necessarily have communicated legal defilement to the place in which his moral presence was displayed. In virtue of its being the residence of the Shechinah, there was both an impossibility of any thing entering it with impunity which was legally impure, and a necessity for vindicating every admission within its precincts, and for making it consistent with ceremonial holiness, by the concomitant aspersion of atoning blood.

Nor was this necessity in any measure lessened by the fact, that no such admission was actually given to the people. They were excluded in respect merely to corporeal locality; they substantially entered by representation; and they had conveyed to them, in the forth-shining of the miraculous cloud, and in the pontifical benedictions which were brought from the Deity and pronounced upon their heads, all the blessings of an entrance literal and individual. They would even have been admitted within the vail, were it not that 'the way into the Holiest of all was not then made manifest.*' An arrest was put upon them in the outer courts, not on account of any failure or uselessness in the propitiatory ministrations, but because there was a want of moral and permanent efficiency in the sacrifice which had been made for them,—a sacrifice which, though it served to do away the guilt of the detached iniquities committed by them during the bygone year, had neither virtue nor design to exterminate the sin of a whole course of acting, which left them under a certainty of their transgressions returning upon them and being remembered against the next yearly expiation, and which therefore had no power to secure a permanency of their abode in the heavenly places, either personally, had they been personally admitted to them, or representatively in their public and supreme officiate.

* Heb. ix. 8.

It was different, however, with the sacrifice of Christ. It was essential to its nature and primary intention, as certainly to introduce men to the true Holy of Holies, and to retain them in it for ever, as to rescue them once for all from condemnation. The introduction, too, which it gives them requires to be something more than a representation of them in the person of their High Priest: it needs to embody their personal and immediate entrance upon its hallowed enjoyments. When, therefore, the victim by which their sins were expiated was in the act of being offered to God, 'The vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom,'*—an event, as we are taught by the apostle, which shewed them that, in consequence of the piacular death which was then undergone on their behalf, 'they have boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for them, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh.'†

The reasons which operated against both the personal approach of the Israelites to the Shechinal, and the permanent continuance in its presence of their pontifical representative, can have no existence under the Christian economy. The sacrifice from which the salvation of believers is derived, unlike those which atoned for the ceremonial sins of the Jews, was, in every point of view, effective and final. It was made by a priest who went to the altar with the express design, and with the divine command to carry it into execution, of conclusively sweeping away the evils of man's moral guilt, of making a lasting amends for the mischief which he had perpetrated, and of perfecting for ever those on whose behalf he officiated.‡ Nothing was left undone which could possibly give occasion to a future demand for piacular

* Matt. xxvii. 50, 51, † Heb. x. 19, 20. ‡ Heb. x. 14.

interference. Worshippers once purged by the sacrificial influence of the work which was then accomplished can have no more consciousness of sins. The way into the Holiest of all was then made manifest; the imperfections which blocked up the access were removed by the abolition of the sacerdotal system which contained them; and there was henceforth recognized in the new apparatus which had been raised, a power of investing men with a legal fitness for the possession of those celestial honors and felicities which it is the purpose of a propitiation to confer.

Heaven, however, is a different world from ours. It is greatly more exalted, in the moral dignity of its inhabitants, than even the primeval paradise of our earth; it possesses, on account of the immediate display in it of God's moral presence, a vastly greater and more hallowed sacredness than any other sinless department of the universe; and it requires the exercise of a peculiar jealousy in watching over the unimpeachableness and positive moral glory of all its transactions. There is, it is admitted, a mutual dependance of a most interesting kind between it and every globe which is peopled with moral agents; yet this alliance, in as far at least as we are concerned with it, includes nothing more than the connexion which exists between the seat of empire and one of its remote and insulated colonies, sustains a claim of authoritative recognition, but refuses to acknowledge a relation of immediate kinship, and affirms us to belong to a modification of moral government, interwoven, indeed, in its general interests, with the direct movements around the divine throne, but both peculiar to ourselves in its administration, and inferior, in the moral standing of its subjects, to the specific and internal government of the upper world.

This makes it manifest that, even on the supposition of man's never having sinned, some solid reason, beyond the

mere sinlessness of nature which he possessed at his creation, must have been produced before he could have been consistently transplanted to the heavenly world. There required to be furnished by him, and laid open to general observation, an actual moral goodness which should evince his meetness for the society of angels, and be approved by God as the evidence of inviolable rectitude. The provision which was made for this formed the very design and essence of the constitution which was established with him in his state of innocence. He was placed in the situation, and invested with the character of a probationer; and it was not till the termination of the period through which his probation was appointed to extend, that he could, even in the strictest retention of his purity, have been allowed to remove from paradise. The contraction of guilt and depravity was necessary, on the one hand, to justify his consignment to the place of punishment; and a tried and dignifying obedience was requisite, on the other, to vindicate his transplantation to heaven.

Now if this was true of men in their unfallen condition, what are we to say respecting them as rebels against God, and apostates from his service? They are justly regarded by the inhabitants of heaven as reckless violators of the divine law, and as worthy of the sorest inflictions of judicial wrath; and how, when they are beheld by them in a point of view so appalling, are they to be consistently introduced to their fellowship, and put on a level with them in the possession of heavenly dignities? Since their redemption is effected vicariously, and since the goodness on account of which they are justified on earth is the imputed righteousness of their substitute, necessity is obviously laid upon him to produce something on their behalf which will effect the purposes that, on the supposition of their never having sinned, would have been answered by their own approved rectitude. He must be required to

display, immediately before God, fruits of his substitutory acting sufficiently excellent in their intrinsic properties, and plainly enough connecting themselves with the translation of men to the celestial sanctuary, to make a transaction so singular harmonize with the rigid laws and the well-guarded holiness of such a sacred place. It is not enough that, upon their admission, they may be seen to have undergone a complete renovation of character, that they have been delivered, by their mediator's agency, from the curse under which they had lain, and that, in both departments of their salvation, 'mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace embraced each other.' A demand, in addition to this, is made for the production of a reason why they are transmitted from the earth, and for the eviction of its being a valid one for their admittance into heaven. They had never yet inhabited nor inherited that hallowed land; they had been uniformly seen from it to be rushing headlong in a wild and furious rebellion; and to have admitted them without their Redeemer's previous aspersion before the throne of propitiatory blood, would have been a palpable and grievous pollution of the Holiest.

The defilement which would thus have been communicated could not, indeed, have occasioned the emittance or transfusion of positive moral evil: this would have been prevented by the redeemed having been purified in the world from both their accursedness and their degradation. Yet it would have constituted the performance and sanctioning of a deed glaringly illegal in itself, wholly inconsistent with the superlative sanctity of the world which was the scene of it, quite incompatible with the respective arrangements and the relative bearings of detached districts in God's moral creation, and sorely injurious to the special modifications of the celestial law and moral administration. What,—the angels might

reasonably and with astonishment ask, when,—without a manifestation being made before them of the materials of a vicarious agency rich and splendid enough to justify the transaction,—they saw a race of beings whom they knew to have been rebels of the wildest nature, admitted to the most glorious place in the creation,—what may we not now be prepared to expect after such a strange and sweeping interference has been made with the first laws of our government? where are now the unparalleled dignities which once made us unapproachable,—except when they were qualified for our companionship through the influence of probation,—by beings created in the inferior worlds? wherefore are those barriers of high and special sacredness thrown down which were wont to be the safeguards of the peculiar moral nobleness of our nature and enjoyments? and what security, after all this, can now be afforded us that another and another influx of creatures lower still perhaps in their moral greatness, will not make successive reductions upon the special grandeur and sanctity of heaven, till both it and we lose the peerless place which we hold in the extended moral universe?

There would thus be just occasion given for remonstrance; and what might be the consequences, it is impossible to conjecture. Nor are we to imagine that the thoughts which we suppose would be inspired are purely thoughts of pride, and that they are therefore incompatible with angelic innocence. It is not from personal vanity that they would spring, but from a consciousness that the singular and well-fenced peculiarity of heavenly society and enjoyments,—that material which constitutes the essence of the celestial law's compensatory sanction, whose preservation in its perfectness and is indispensable to the well-being and even to the of the divine government, and a deterioration

its bearing upon moral agents who have never sinned, would be equally hazardous and alarming with a relaxation of penal inflictions upon the guilty,—had undergone a dilution evidently destructive of its nature, and vastly diminishing to its worth. Since, therefore, such would obviously be the immediate effects of the transaction, since it would be wholly inconsistent with the scrupulous rectitude of the divine procedure, and since the effects of it upon heaven itself would be of an endangering description; it is plain that, in order to harmonize it with the moral interests of every one to whom its influence either directly or remotely extends, and to mantle it with a glory as brilliant as its ignobleness would otherwise be gloomy, there existed the sternest necessity for its being preceded and warranted by the presentation of Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice immediately before the throne of God.

There was exactly the same need for this in order to justify the introduction of men to the joys and society of heaven, as there was for the humiliation and crucifixion of the Saviour on earth in order to accomplish their consistent deliverance from wrath. Had any other place than our world been the scene of the latter, the curse would not have been vicariously endured in connexion with the precise modification of moral government under which it had been incurred, and it hence could not, without risking the well-being of the divine administration, have been averted from the head of the original transgressors; and, upon nearly the same principle, had nothing more been done with the Christian sacrifice than the offering of it upon Mount Calvary, and had it not been carried into the heavenly places and presented there, men could not, without a compromise being made of the sacredly pure and peculiar laws of the upper world, have been

permitted to enter upon it as their everlasting inheritance.

We are to remember, moreover, that it is from the throne, or from the right hand of the Majesty on high, that Christ dispenses eternal life to his people, and that it is as 'the heir of all things,'—a character which he possesses only in connexion with his session,—that he bestows upon them power to enter the heavenly world. Yet Paul's reasoning with the Hebrews makes it plain that he was exalted to that seat wholly on account of his Father's approbation, and therefore of his own presentation before him, of the sacrifice which he offered. 'And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering, he hath perfected for ever those for whom he made expiation.*'

His exaltation, it is true, had nothing similar to it nor any thing by which it was even symbolized or prefigured in the history of Aaron; yet this arose from no inherent defect in the system of typification, but originated entirely in the moral inefficiency of the sacrifices of which it consisted. Aaron carried atoning blood within the vail, and sprinkled it toward the propitiatory. This, however, 'could never take away sins;' it was not looked upon by God as a ground for remitting moral transgression; and, in regard to ceremonial impurity itself, it gave no security for its not being contracted anew by the people. The sacrifice was not definitive upon the extermination of even ritual iniquity; and, upon moral guilt, it had neither real nor pretended influence. So far,

* Heb. x. 11—14.

therefore, from his being called to sit down on the right of the Shechinah, or even to continue any where in the place of its abode, the Jewish High Priest was compelled to retire immediately from its presence, and to descend afresh to the society of men.

The very reverse of this was true with respect to Christ. His blood was fully adequate to effect all the great purposes for which it had been shed; and when he presented it before his Father, it was viewed by him with the loftiest satisfaction and complacency. He did not, consequently, require to return from the sanctuary, but was beckoned, as the result and the reward of having so completely finished the work which had been given him to do, to sit down in the place of honor, power, and glory at the right hand of God.

Now it is to be observed that, since it is from this lofty and honorable elevation that he pours down upon his people the 'spiritual blessings in the heavenlies,' and dispenses to them the right and the privileges of 'entering in through the gates into the city,' they could never have received from him the high boon of the unfading inheritance, unless, in order first of all to secure to himself the seat and the prerogatives whence the blessing is conferred, he had carried his blood into the true heavens, and there placed his sacrifice before his Father. Without this, indeed, he would have effected their absolution from guilt, and their rescue from the wrath which it merits; but he could not, without it, have either gained for himself a place on the throne of exaltation which he now occupies, or given thence the right to them of sitting down with him upon it as partakers of its dignity and felicities. Their glorification is dependent upon his own exaltation; and his session, in which the essence of it consists, was subsequent to the presentation of his sacrifice in the presence of God. Had not, consequently, his

blood been produced and sprinkled in heaven, his redeemed could never have been empowered or permitted to enter its holy domains.

These and other considerations to which we have referred, sufficiently illustrate the principles on which Paul affirms the presentation of Christ's blood in the upper sanctuary to have been an indispensable step in his atonement. What we have stated may serve to shew us, too, that when he speaks of this act as having constituted a purification of heaven, we are to understand him as regarding it, not in an absolute point of view, but in one altogether relative. He does not and cannot view it as an action in which there was a doing away of any actual moral evil,—a thing the very supposition of whose existence around the divine throne is blasphemous; nor does he refer to it as having put down any positive moral defilement which may be supposed to have risen up from the ruins of that apostacy, the effects of which the Redeemer's death had destroyed. The whole that it includes was the performance of a work without which legal impurity would have been contracted. Without it, the admission of mankind into heaven would have been an unjustifiable and injurious deed; but with it, a display is afforded of the moral glory in which the transaction is arrayed which makes the holy places, in being the scene of it, as resplendent with the honor which it reflects upon them, as they would else have been degraded by its legal wrongness. In this relative and legal way it was, that, while the patterns of things in the heavens were purged by the blood of bulls and of goats, it was necessary that the heavenly things themselves should be purified with better sacrifices than these.

This, then, is the reason why it was needful for Christ to go away from his disciples; and this is the nature of that preparation of heaven for their reception which he

went to accomplish. Previous to his entrance into glory, it was impossible for them in law, even though the Saviour had expiated their guilt and freed them from condemnation, to enjoy celestial honours. 'Whether I go ye cannot follow me now, but ye shall follow me afterwards.*' 'Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father.†' 'In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.‡' 'Look to Jesus the author and finisher of your faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' For in him, 'ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel.§'

Such is the inseparable connexion which is declared to exist between Christ's exaltation, his purification of heaven, or his preparation of it for the reception of his people, and their personal admission within its walls and

* John xiii. 36. † John xiv. 28. ‡ John xiv. 2, 3. § Heb. xii. 2, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24.

eternal possession of its glory. When, therefore, he ascended up on high and presented before God the victim which he had sacrificed in his death, he fully accomplished the last act of his piacular process. He then laid open the way into the heavenly inheritance, and brought himself into a situation whence he as certainly gives to his followers a perfect legal title to reign with him in glory, as, in virtue of his immolation and oblation on the Cross, he was formerly empowered to rescue them from positive punishment. By this finishing action, consequently, he consummated his work of atonement, and added to its purely piacular qualities, the higher properties of a propitiation.

SECT. III.

The Properties of Christ as a Sacrifice.

By the sacrificial properties of Christ, we understand those qualities possessed by him as a piacular victim, in consequence of which his atonement was efficacious. They may be summed up in three,—his perfect freedom from moral defilement,—his capacity of enduring the precise punishment which had been incurred by men,—and the infinite moral dignity of his person. In discussing these, the fourfold object will be gained, of acquiring a correct view of his substitutionary character, of ascertaining the ingredients in which the intrinsic value of his sacrifice consisted, of detecting the different erroneous sentiments which have been held respecting what constituted the effective materials of his atonement, and of de-

termining, in respect both to its sufficiency and its efficiency, the amount of worth which it possessed. All of these are points of fundamental importance; and each of them might with advantage undergo a separate consideration. They are all, however, virtually involved in the first, and will not, we apprehend, be thrust from the high place which they individually occupy, by being exhibited together.

In a primary light, indeed, 'the sacrificial properties of Christ' is an appellative phrase which may be used indifferently of his vicarious character, and of the effective ingredients of his expiation. In the case of the Redeemer, his qualities as a priest, and his qualities as a victim are, in regard to the personal subject of them, identical; yet in reference to the sphere which he occupied respectively as a piacular substitute, and as a sacerdotal offerer, they are perfectly distinct. In the latter capacity, he acted merely as mediator or advocate. It is only in the former that, in the proper use of language, he stood in the situation of man's substitute. When we look, therefore, at his substitutionary or sacrificial character, we have, on the one hand, a full view of the source whence the saving virtue of his atonement emanates; and, on the other, we have ample evidence for setting aside the false views which have been entertained regarding either this source itself, or the extent of good which its influence was intended to accomplish. In order, then, to illustrate this character, and to bring a portraiture of it before the mind, we remark that one of its leading features was,

I. A perfect freedom from all moral impurity.

The truth that moral purity is requisite in a piacular victim, was fully recognized by the Mosiac ritual. The

bullocks and other animals which were presented on the altar, were not, and could not be the subjects of moral agency, nor could they be affirmed to possess either moral rectitude or its opposite; yet, in the typical character which they sustained, a sufficient prefigurative exhibition was given of the necessity and the presence of a thorough holiness in the actually expiatory sacrifice which they typified. Provision was made by the divine law that animals only of a certain description, in regard both to species and to individual quality, should be eligible to the service of the sanctuary; and this provision, in both of its bearings, had a palpable respect to the typical representation of moral sinlessness. 'Of the animals used for sacrifices, some were inhabitants of the earth and others of the air. Passing by numerous species of birds, God chose two out of them all, because of those which are naturally mild and gregarious, the pigeon is the mildest, and the turtle dove is the mildest of those which are solitary; and of animals, passing by unnamed species which it would not be easy to enumerate, he has given the exclusive preference to three, bullocks, sheep, and goats, for they are the most gentle and tractable.*

A selection which so uniformly rejected all whose nature is fierce, and chose those only which are most eminently tender in their dispositions, harmless in their conduct, and useful when domesticated, evidently proceeded upon the principle, that no sacrificial offering whose oblation is designed to expiate guilt, must be chargeable with personal delinquency. The blood of man was required at the hand of every beast by which it might be shed.† The influence of a ferocious spirit in the wilder animals leads them to acts of slaughter when it is in their power to perpetrate them. Though they are destitute of the ac-

* Philo de Animal. ad sacrif. adhibitis.

† Gen. ix. 5.

countability of moral agents, yet the existence of a statute which regarded them as subjected, by their commission of a deed of murder, to penal condemnation, both discovers the reason why none of them were eligible to an immolation on the altar, and explains the cause of those only being chosen which are possessed of a different nature. Those that have dispositions and habits which render them noxious to man, were reckoned to be constitutionally under the excitement of tempers which, when they had opportunity to operate and to manifest themselves in actions, would ceremonially involve them in guilt, and expose them, as the award of their personal transgressions, to the infliction of a punitive death; but those, on the other hand, which are naturally gentle, which have no inherent inclination to occasion injury to a human being, and whose conduct is throughout an emblem of innocence, were regarded as altogether free from any exposure to ritual condemnation, and to any consequent liability to suffering originating in their own demerits. The lamb especially, on account of its being so strikingly emblematic of all that is morally excellent and lovely, was viewed as a creature most eminently qualified for the purposes of expiation, was constituted the subject of the vast majority of offerings, was presented on the altar incalculably more often than any other species, and was erected into a special type or the meekness, patience, amiableness, and combined holiness of Him who 'was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb opened not his mouth,'* who purchased his people 'with his own precious blood as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,'† and who, in allusion to it, and by way of describing both his moral and sacrificial qualities, is emphatically called, 'the Lamb of God.'‡ There is, therefore, in a

* Isa. liii. 7.

† 1 Pet. i. 19.

‡ John i. 29.

peculiar manner, in the nature of the lamb, as well as, in a general way, in that of all the other species which were set apart for the altar, something fitly adapted to symbolize the absence of all moral pravity.

It is possible, however, that notwithstanding the truth of this with regard to a whole tribe, there might have been found individual sheep or bullocks possessed of some offensive properties, which may have destroyed the notion of their symbolic purity, and fastened upon them a disqualification for the uses of the sanctuary. There are other things besides mere disposition which enter into our ideas of what is amiable. There are diseases and deformities of the body which, in spite of our acquiescence in the truth of their neither changing the mind nor influencing the temper, render the subject of them loathsome, and compel us involuntarily to shrink from his presence; and these, when they are found in those animals which are otherwise regarded by us with complacency, are so incompatible with a figurative representation of perfectly lovely and admirable moral qualities, that we may reasonably suppose them to have completely neutralized the eligibility of chosen victims for being sacrificed. All, accordingly, which were blemished by them, were pointedly proscribed. 'Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the Lord, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar to the Lord. Ye shall not offer unto the Lord that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut, neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.* Such of these corporeal qualities as were nauseous or repulsive suggest nothing but an idea of corruption, and could, in no imaginable way, be emblematic of what is morally excellent, and calculated to excite our unquali-

* Lev. xxii. 22. 24.

fied veneration; and others of them which produce no unpleasant sensations when they are looked upon, are yet defects which disempower the subjects of them from being proper symbols of absolute moral perfection. The lamb, therefore, or he-goat, or bullock in which they were found, could not be accepted from an offerer. 'Its corruption or its blemishes were in it.* It had properties which represented either a positive pravity, or the absence of perfect purity.

There were thus a scrupulous selection of those species whose nature is the mildest, and a careful exclusion even from among them of every individual whose bodily diseases or defects might interfere with a correct exhibition of rectitude. In addition to this, however, and in order to stamp its sternest disapprobation upon every animal whose circumstances might reflect in any light whatever upon its stainlessness, the ritual, in respect even to victims which were intrinsically unexceptionable, pronounced them disqualified for the altar by certain things in their relative situation. 'Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow, for even both these are abomination to the Lord thy God.† The animal which is referred to in either part of the statute was destitute of moral agency, altogether passive in the deeds with which it was relatively concerned, and, on both accounts, could not, in its personal character, be affected by the moral qualities of the transaction by which it passed from one proprietor to another; yet, while it could be pointed at as the price of sin, or as the gift bestowed in the permission of a nefarious intercourse, there was a delinquency in its history which caused it to be stigmatized in a manner wholly unbefitting what is 'holy to the Lord.'

* Lev. xlii. 25. † Deut. xxiii. 18.

It might itself have been altogether unblemished, but its transmission from man to man had been effected through a grossly impure channel. This was enough to prevent its being the material of a sacrifice whose antitype is, in every respect, removed at the farthest distance from the slightest moral defilement. In all these ways, therefore,—in the choice of certain species of animals, in the prescription of all which had any corporeal blemish, and in the rejection of those which had been the wages of wickedness,—the law of Moses and the rites of the Jews perpetually testified that there can be no expiation by the sacrifice of a defiled or morally imperfect victim.

The reason of this lies in the very heart of those principles on which vicarious satisfaction to the demands of the law is admissible. The Divine Being is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and he cannot look upon sin. An immaculate holiness is essential to his nature, and involves all his other perfections. Without it, there could neither be wisdom, goodness or truth, in his deeds, nor harmony or stability in his moral administration. It must not merely have an abstract existence : it must also manifest itself in the whole of his procedure, and give hue and a character to all his purposes and appointments. Every thing which he does or sanctions must frown upon iniquity, and testify his displeasure at sin. It is hence that the appendage of a penal sanction to his law, and the rigorous execution of the threatenings which it utters upon the person of transgressors, have as much to do with the vindication and display of his own moral rectitude, as with the preservation of the happiness and subordination of his sinless subjects. The permission of a sinner to pass with impunity would make an implication of the continuance of favor, and would argue a connivance at sin, a morbidness in the sense of dislike to it, and a carelessness about manifesting an abhorrence of it.

enormity, which are utterly inconsistent with the divine nature. There would then be given a tacit license to indulge in its commission, and a silent assurance that men would not be reckoned with for their wickedness,—a license which would become still more explicit if, instead of such a negative promulgation of it, it were written in the impress of a divine approbation upon any measure or movement with which moral evil were intermingled,—an assurance which would be issued with an audible voice and ratified by an accompaniment of corresponding actions, if appointments could be discovered destitute of purity and originating immediately with God.

A mediatorship is one of these. Hence, if the sacrifice with which all the services of it that terminate upon God are connected, be void of intrinsic holiness, the divine institution of it would be an appointment fearfully discrepant with all the settled laws of a moral government. The Deity perfectly foresees all the qualities and actions of an individual which futurity will develope; and with the foresight of a priest's inability to present any thing but a sinful or even peccable victim on the altar, he could not have called him to the sacred office. In his consecration, God not only interferes, but gives a testimony of his thorough acquiescence in his personal character and sacerdotal qualifications. If time, therefore, should make it manifest that he has power to attempt a process of expiation by nothing better than a sinful instrumentality, there would, with the divine foreknowledge of such a fundamental defectiveness in capacity and of such a consequent obliquity in ministration, have been a virtual approval of them in heaven, both in his call and inauguration. A priesthood which cannot immolate a spotless victim, or which endeavours to accomplish an atonement by any means whatever which are morally

impure, is spurious in its nature, adverse to the purposes of its institution, and can never meet with the sanction, complacency, or co-operation of Jehovah.

An atonement, besides, in order to its productiveness of effect in those for whom it is made, must be formally accepted by God. Such an acceptance is expressly and altogether a divine act, and, if the victim presented in the execution of the piacular process were personally impure, would be another instance of God's concurrence in an unholy transaction. Nor could any supposable qualities in the priest or any possible performances of a counter-acting nature accomplished either by him or by any other agent, tend in the remotest way to mantle over the impurity, or to prevent the fatal consequences of its being sanctioned. In the act of acceptance there would, in spite of all the neutralizing influences which could be exerted, be not only a connivance at sin, but a manifest complacency in an object which sin had polluted. If the sacrifice were unholy, and if God were to express himself well pleased with the making of it, what more palpable acquiescence could there be in something more than the existence,—in the goodness and ascendancy of iniquity under his moral government? The act would be an alarming cessation of all his necessary and immutable indignation at moral evil, and would, in every point of view, be diametrically opposed in its nature to his own infinite spotlessness, and to all the principles of his procedure. If expiation were attempted by such an instrumentality, it would, in his estimation, be full of the most revolting abomination, and, in virtue of the sin which mingled with it, would provoke the manifestations of his righteous wrath. Whatever be the situation which the subject of iniquity occupies under his dominion, he must be the certain object of his vindictive anger. No purposes to which he may be set apart can tend to throw a

sacredness over him, which will diminish the offensiveness and wrath-worthiness of his character. Since, therefore, there can be no divine acquiescence in any thing unholy, and since such an acquiescence, assuming the form of even an overt approbation, is indispensable to the efficiency of a piacular ministration, it is obvious that there can be no expiation, but by a victim which is thoroughly possessed of personal holiness.

This, however, is reasoning merely of a negative description. It is sufficient for shewing the necessity of a perfectly holy sacrifice; yet, in the evidence which it affords, it is surpassed by the arguments of a positive nature which can be adduced. The purity of the divine government not only rejects a victim which is sinful, but pointedly demands one which is both spotless and impeccable.

The mischief which a work of expiation is designed to counteract consisted of disobedience; and the performance by which it is to be done away must proceed from a tried and superior moral excellence. It is of the essence of a vicarious process which, like that of answering the demands of the law upon a transgressor, is restorative in its tendency, that the acting or suffering substitute be possessed of qualities which directly array themselves against the respective ingredients of the evil, and perfectly correspond with the different properties of the restoration. It assumes the destitution and powerlessness of the man on whose account it is undertaken, affirms him to have lost some possessions which it is of importance to regain, avers his incapacity to put forth the physical or moral energy which is requisite for re-acquiring them, and deposes another, who has willingness and ability to perform what he cannot himself accomplish, to act in his stead. Without such assumptions, there could be no substitution. If either all men were, with the consent of their wills and

without a deleterious exertion of strength, thoroughly empowered, in every matter which concerns them and in every relationship which they sustain, to act for themselves, or if, in the absence of such an unqualified ability, they could find no other being of superior capacities who had power where they have weakness, worth where they have demerit, and virtue where they have vice, whom they could obtain to occupy their place and prosecute their well-being, all supposable ground on which vicarious acting could proceed, would be entirely destroyed. The uniform object of substitution is the performance of something for another which he cannot do for himself; the obvious inference from its existence is a contrast between the powers of the principal and those of the person who acts for him; and these powers, according to the precise nature of the end which the vicarious exertion of them by the substitute has in view, form the civil, physical, or moral character of the respective parties.

If an individual formerly possessed of wealth were to become pennyless and insolvent, and if another were to enter his place, assume the responsibility of liquidating his debts, and restore him to his former opulence, the wealthlessness and insolvency of the one would stamp upon him the civil characteristics of poverty and bankruptcy, and the substitutionary actions of the other would argue his possession of exactly the opposite properties. Were a person removed by disease from a field of manual labour, were he unable to cut the root or to stint the growth of his distemper, and were a benefactor voluntarily to supplant him, to bear his burdens, perform his work, heal his disease, and recover him to his primeval vigor, the transaction would as certainly prove the corporeal power and the medical skill of the substitute, as it necessarily supposes the bodily diseasedness and the mediocrity of the principal. In cases like these, th

or physical standing of a vicarious agent is known by opposing it to the character of the man whose room he occupies. When the substitutionary process, upon the same principle, has any moral things for its object, there must be at least equal if not even stronger reasons for the suffering or acting victim possessing qualities completely contrary to the moral character of the sinner. Had the civil and physical substitutes been destitute of wealth and strength, it is impossible that they could efficiently have acted, or rather that they could have acted at all for the bankrupt and the invalid. A piacular offering, in the same way, were it not absolutely free from the moral weakness and worthlessness which characterize the transgressor, would be equally unfit for propitiating the Deity as himself. Both it and he would then be left to perish in their sins.

We are to recollect, moreover, that the suffering endured in expiation, has in it the nature of obedience. It is not merely a passive sustaining of inflicted wrath, but is also a practical exhibition of the rectitude and moral excellence of the law. 'Sin being a breach of moral obligation, nothing but a moral deed can possess a moral fitness for its expiation. Had not the sufferings of Christ been obediential in their nature, they could not have served to vindicate the dishonored character of the lawgiver, nor could they have effected the redemption of the church. Hence the connexion between his obedience and sufferings. He obeyed when he suffered, and he suffered when he obeyed.* Atonement is a work precisely the reverse of that which occasioned the degradation and misery of man. Both in their consequences, and in their intrinsic nature, they are directly contrasted. The one was not merely an act of transgression in which abstract guilt and

* Russell c = Ad. and Med. Dispen. p. 296, 297.

consequent condemnation were incurred, but also a deed of demoralization in which the transcript of God's moral image on the soul was effaced, and a positive and inherent depravity interwoven with the dispositions and affections of the heart; the other, in addition to a passive sustenance of wrath which does away, in the transference of it to his substitute, the guilt of the transgressor, involves an actual righteousness, imputes it to the sinner, and, in virtue of it, draws forth upon him a divine favor and a renovating influence which counteract the sinking tendency of his corruption. It has both a neutralizing effect upon the curse under which he is placed, and an efficient bearing upon the authoritative utterance respecting him of a sentence of approbation. Justification, in which the results of it are realized, does not acquit the prisoner upon a verdict either of not proven or of not guilty; but, convinced that such a species of dismissal from condemnation, though it gave him a present deliverance from judicial retribution, would set him afloat upon the very ocean in which his moral character had already suffered shipwreck, and would expose him to the hazard of another ruin by the first rock or sand-bank which might be found in his course, it recognizes his investment with a positive goodness, has a prospective reference to his certain amelioration of conduct, and pronounces him an individual all whose relationships and radical character are entirely changed, and who is henceforth no more a son of Satan but a child of God. It is at once an act of acquittal, and an act of acceptance. It both delivers from punishment, and confers actual blessings. It removes its subject from a dispensation of law, and places him under a dispensation of grace. It strips him of the raiment of a felon, and arrays him in the garments of a sovereign's child. All this it does in consequence of the expiation which was made for order therefore to its being an equitable ac

harmony with the purity and glory of the divine administration, and entirely removed from every thing derogatory to God, the piacular victim must have possessed both a capacity of enduring the wrath which the sinner had merited, and a power of bringing in an everlasting righteousness which might be imputed to him as the ground of his receiving an actual approbation.

An atonement is thus possessed of a twofold material, —that which turns away the frowns of the law's curse, and that which draws forth the smiles of the lawgiver's blessing. Both are uniformly affirmed of it in its prefigurative character under the former economy, and each is constantly designated by a distinct and appropriate epithet.* It is hence a work which is directly contrasted, in the properties and results of it, to that which constituted man's apostacy. As the one, therefore, was intrinsically bad, and formed the parent source of all the moral mischief which has corrupted and desolated our race, the other, from its origination of the opposite good, is necessarily holy, and free from every moral impurity. Without a thorough rectitude, the victim in whose oblation it consists could not, by any possibility, give out a redeeming influence upon its principal, and, in consequence of its own defilement, could have no substitutionary righteousness, and therefore no quality whatever to form a ground of his acceptance with God.

An expiation, besides, is of the nature of a ransom. It regards itself as having to do with the law, as well as with the Deity, and views sinners as being at once under his judicial displeasure, and under its incarcerative power. They are regarded as slaves and prisoners, who are held fast in chains which the law has thrown around them, maintained in a vassalage in which it acts as their slave-

* ἁγιασμός and καθάρσιμος.

holder, and shut up in a dungeon of which it has the keeping. It retains them in its possession as its indisputable property, affirms them to have forfeited their lives to it by their disobedience, claims a just and exclusive right to have them at its disposal, and demands, as the only way in which it will withhold from them the eternal punishment with which it purposes to visit them, the payment, on their behalf, of an adequate price for their redemption. The ransom-money which it requires is 'not such corruptible things as silver and gold,' but 'the precious price' of a blood which possesses enough of moral worth to undo all the guilt and depravation of its prisoners. The property which it has lost by their defection is purely moral; and the restitution of it can be effected by nothing but the extermination of the moral evil which these have wrought, and the re-investment of them with the moral goodness which they have destroyed. The man, therefore, who undertakes to accomplish their redemption, must possess a sufficient sum of moral specie for paying down the required amount of ransom-money; he must, in his negociation with the law, appear with it in his hands, and be recognized as the holder of a plentiful opulence; and he must, in this way, be both personally and vicariously holy,—himself the holy one and the just, and all the while 'the Lord our Righteousness.'

In a variety of ways, then,—whether we consider the nature of a divine appointment, the concomitancy of a priesthood's institution and the foreknowledge of the moral quality of its performances, the connexion which exists between the efficiency of an atonement and its acceptance by God, the twofold bearing of a piacular process upon the double nature of a transgressor's sinfulness, or the relation which guilty man has v as his slave-holder,—it is apparent that no properly discharge the sacrificial function of hi

presentation of a victim which is not, in every sense of the phraseology, perfectly free from sin. 'Cursed be the deceiver who hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great king saith the Lord of Hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.* By the immolation of such a victim, he would only aggravate the mischief which his official ministrations were designed to neutralize, and render himself obnoxious to the very curse from which he intended to rescue his constituents.

No such victim, however, was offered by the great and efficient High Priest of our race. 'He became a sin-offering for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.† So pure and undefiled was his heart, and so unblemished the whole of his procedure, that his severest enemies felt themselves compelled to bear testimony to his sinlessness. In the fullest consciousness of perfect rectitude, he could confidently appeal to his Father himself in vindication of his purity. 'Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart. For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth. I have not walked with vile persons, neither will I go with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evil-doers, and I will not sit with the wicked.‡

This was the character of the sacrifice which was offered by Christ. It was, in every respect, absolutely holy, and, both in a personal and relative way, was free from all sin. The Saviour was plied with every temptation which either men or devils could invent; yet, in defiance of all their onsets and enticements, he triumphantly maintained his integrity. He was not only pure, but impeccable.

* Mal. i. 14.

† 2 Cor. v. 21.

‡ Ps. xvi. 1—5.

As Immanuel, he was infinitely holy, and could not, by any possibility, be guilty of transgression. The moral law was an impress of his own moral character,—the wax on which the image of himself was indented. It derived from him both its being and its nature, and purely on account of his infinite holiness and necessary impeccability, can never be subverted. It will, by a moral necessity, exist and be in force for ever; and, by a divine necessity, he himself always was and is and shall be perfectly immaculate to support its authority and execute its sanction. In the very nature of things, therefore, the Redeemer stands at an infinite distance from impurity.

In as far, then, as moral excellence is a requisite part of efficient sacrificial character, Christ was amply qualified to bear away the sins of men. ‘He made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness.’ He is the righteous servant of the Father, and, by his knowledge and expiation, justifies many from their iniquities. ‘Because of truth and meekness and righteousness, he rides forth in state prosperously.’ ‘He has loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, his God hath anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows.’ The victim which he sacrificed was sinless; it was in harmony with the unsullied purity of the divine procedure to accept it; his sacerdotal and sacrificial properties were perfectly in unison; his expiation secured, in consistency with the most rigorous equity, the twofold end of a justifying act; the holiness of his sacrifice was the moral material in which the law required the sinners ransom-money to be paid; and, in respect therefore to his unspottedness as a peculiar victim, he possessed the fullest qualifications for expiating sin.

This, however, is but one of the ingredients in which the efficacy of an atonement consists, and, notwithstanding

its indispensability and value, would not of itself have originated the requisite saving virtue. It was a leading feature of the Saviour's piacular character; yet, before his sacrifice could have been of solid utility to men, it required to be accompanied with

II. *A Capacity of enduring the precise Punishment which has been incurred by Sinners.*

The law which man has broken was directly promulgated in our world, adapts the aspect and verbiage of its precepts to the peculiar circumstances of mankind, and annexes to its commandments a definite penal sanction. The threatenings which it utters against the disobedient accurately pourtray the consequences of transgression, and engage to award to it a certain description and amount of punitive retribution. The exact penalty, therefore, which it denounced is that to which man has made himself obnoxious by his guilt. It is this alone which his apostacy has merited; and it is strictly and only this which can be equitably inflicted upon a sacrificial victim suffering in his stead.

Penal inflictions may be of almost any conceivable description. A vast variety of them may be imagined to exist in the immensely numerous departments of the moral universe. In endless diversity of shade, they may be conceived to constitute the different penal sanctions of those laws which are in force among the intelligent creatures of other globes; and, in their numerous modifications, they may be regarded as realized by the various orders of moral agents who may have fallen from their original innocence. In point of equity and radical material, they are, doubtless, all substantially the same; yet, in correspondence with the respective enactments with which they are connected, and in harmony with a general

principle of adaptation to the generic properties and situation of accountable beings, they suit themselves to the organic diversities of their moral constitution.

There is only one specific kind of them, however, with which our world has concern. Now this, we apprehend, is so completely *sui generis* that a strong improbability, if not an absolute impossibility, exists of there being capacity to endure it in any race of creatures who are not morally constituted upon the same principles as ourselves. It has respect to man in all the peculiarities of his nature as a being who is made up of mind and matter in a state of mysterious union, whose soul and body are mutually subservient in their respective movements, whose moral judgments and actions are affected by considerations which address themselves to his understanding through a sensible and organically material medium, whose moral faculty is often swayed by the concussion of active powers which derive many of their excitements from their close relationship with a nervous system in the body, and who, when a separation is effected between the component parts of his constitution, is dead, and, until a re-union of them is accomplished, no longer exists in the moral capacities and the moral relationships which belong to him as a subject of the special modification of moral government which is established over the earth. The curse, consequently, which, as a transgressor, he has incurred, first makes its inflictions upon his complex constitution, afflicting him for a season with all the physical evils which originate in either the union of mind and body, or the connexion of both with the sensible objects around him; it then tears him away from the present state of being by an arrest of temporal death; and it finally shuts him up in a place of torment where his sufferings exert force upon the intellectual part of his nature. minutely adapted to his characteristic circum-

qualities, and cannot, therefore, in all the length and breadth of it, be endured by any but our race.

Now there is manifestly both a propriety and a necessity that this very curse, in its special and distinguishing ingredients, as well as in those which it may have in common with the judicial inflictions of other districts of the universe, should be undergone by a sacrificial substitute who undertakes to suffer in the room of man. It is this which forms the exact penal sanction of the law which we have broken, constitutes the precise kind of punitive retribution which was threatened against us before we sinned, and makes up the only punishment which can justly be awarded to our transgressions. Any thing else was never announced in the declarations of the sanction, and cannot, without a violation of the first principles of equity, be inflicted upon either the sinner or his substitute. Whether iniquity be punished in the original subject of it, or in the person of one who, in virtue of its being legally transferred to him, becomes accountable to the law for its commission, nothing can be its righteous retribution but what the sentence of condemnation denounced.

Even in governments which are purely human, and which must be conducted with all the imperfections which are inseparable from finitude and depravation, it would be reckoned a grossly unrighteous thing to visit any act of civil transgression with a punishment which was not recorded in the statute-book, and threatened specifically against it, before it was committed. Even when two distinct penalties might be thought equal in the amount of their severity, it would be accounted more indefensible and unlawful still, to inflict a different one from that which was defined in the sentence that was actually pronounced upon the arraignment of the culprit and the establishment of his guilt. There might be a

commutation, but there could not be a transmutation of the punishment. Mercy might interfere and supplant it with one of confessedly less suffering and ignominy ; but if no such interference were made, justice would sternly forbid its undergoing the slightest alteration. If it were ordered to consist of a prescribed period of imprisonment, it would be fault-worthy to excess to dispense, instead of it, a proportionate degree of public flagellation ; and if it were commanded to be death by crucifixion, no justifiable reason could alter it into a death of any other agonizing and ignominious description. The very nature of vindictive justice requires correctness on a subject of such material importance ; and it requires it as well in the case of a substitute, as in that of a personal transgressor.

It is true that, to the comprehension of even an enlarged mind, two kinds of retribution may be so nearly balanced in the amount of suffering which they embody, as to make it difficult to determine whether of them be the most lenient or severe. To the mind of God, however, who intuitively perceives all the bearings and balances of the most complicated movement, and who estimates every thing with an exactness that quadrates with its minutest dimensions, there must, in two things which differ in either the qualities of their substance or the nature of their materials, be discovered some difference in their value,—something which evinces the impossibility of the searching and scrupulous arithmetic of heaven pronouncing their intrinsic worth to be thoroughly equal. However slight the disagreement between two punishments may be, it must, in every case, be fully perceived by the omniscient eye of God. The existence of it, therefore, though it shewed the one to outweigh the other in but the smallest possible degree, would make it incompatible with the exercise of an infinite equity to render them interchangeable, and to award to the sinner the opposite one to that

which his iniquities had incurred. That which is specified by the law is the one which is due; and equity forbids its supplantation by another.

This, we have said, holds equally true of the personal transgressor, and of the individual who suffers in his stead. Substitution is a mere transference of guilt, and is, in no respect, a transmutation of its penalty. It implies nothing more than the doing or enduring by one, what ought to have been done or suffered by another. It is not a change of the thing, but only a change of the person. If, therefore, in awarding to the sinner a punishment whose amount of intrinsic value was seen by God to be greater or less than the exact species of retribution which his transgressions have deserved, there would be either a supercession or a dereliction of perfect equity, the same thing would be true, were the infliction transferred from him to a substitute. The criminal's defection has occasioned a loss of a certain and defined description; the payment of the moral sum which equals it will liquidate the debt; and neither any thing beyond this can be exacted, nor any thing below it be received, without a violation of strict justice. The quality of the retribution evidently bears upon the question of its quantity,—the kind upon that of the degree. If the one be affected in the judicial act, an inequitable and injurious interference will be made with the other. If, therefore, the substitute were required to undergo a different punitive infliction from what had been denounced against the sinner, the penal sanction would be injured either by exacting more, or by accepting less than what is due.

In every case in which a vicarious system has been admitted among men, the principle which identifies the primitive and the substitutionary claims of the law, has been fully recognized. No distinction has been ever made between the execution of a threatening upon the

original sinner, and the absorption of it by a person legally occupying his room. Amputation, torture, exile, or incarceration have been awarded to the substitutes as they were merited by their respective principals. No one, in the transference, has been allowed to supplant another. Such a method of proceeding has been deemed essential to the very safety of a judicial system, and has always been regarded as necessarily resulting from correct views of vindictive equity. And shall this be said of the governments of men, and yet be denied of the administration of God? 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?' Are not his threatenings uttered with as much certitude as his promises? 'Hath he said it, and will he not do it? hath he spoken it, and will he not make it good?'

While, besides, there are various imaginable ways in which iniquity might have been punished, there must have existed some solid reason for the selection of that special penalty which is expressed in the denunciation against its commission. It is supposable that the ends of justice might have been gained, by retaining us eternally on the earth, and inventing methods of torment which, without severing the soul from the body, might have everlasting agonized us through the medium of our nervous system or corporeal organs,—by leaving the body unaffected, and wrapping itself up with a doubly devouring influence in the mind,—or by destroying the mutual subserviency of the two ingredients of our constitution, annihilating at the moment of the apostacy that which is material, and pouring out the vial of wrath immediately upon the disembodied spirit. These, or other conceivable methods of punishment, might have been adopted. The only reason, therefore, of the lawgiver's having them and chosen, in preference to them, the retribution which he has sanctionally a

law, must have been some perceived adaptation of it to our moral constitution, or some manifest and fundamental fitness between the penalty and the crime.

Now if there was such a fitness in the established mode of punishment at the time of legislation, it must continue in it still, and, in virtue of the divine immutability, must remain in it for ever. To alter it would be inconsistent alike with God's unchangeableness, and his foreknowledge. If a change takes place, there must be some proper and justifiable ground for its adoption. It is inconceivable, however, how this should not have been seen, and felt, and acted upon at the period of the first enactment. To repeal existing statutes, remodel the penal code, and alter the punitive deserts of crime, are actions worthy only of the shifting and imperfect legislations of men, and are thoroughly incompatible with the wisdom and stability of the administration of Jehovah. Either all or one of them, would fling a suspicion upon his foresight of the occurrences which occasioned them, and be subversive of the absolute perfection and permanency of his appointments.

Nor would the case be different if, instead of being awarded to the transgressor, the punitive inflictions should be executed upon a substitute. The unalteredness of the penal law makes a distinction between them impossible. A change upon it would as certainly be effected by altering the punishment when inflicted upon the one, as it would be by commuting it when awarded to the other. Only one species of curse has been denounced. Nothing but a dereliction of it can prevent either the primitive or vicarious endurance of another in its stead. It is, in every way, the only wages which human transgression has won. The payment of it, consequently, with a different kind of currency from that which was stipulated, would be a departure from former purposes, a

repeal of previous enactments, and a decreeing of new penalties, which would reflect alike from the person of a principal and a substitute, a glare of derogation and disgrace upon the wisdom and perfectness of the law-giver's government.

There is thus an impossibility of consistently rendering any other penalty to a sacrificial victim than that which is directly due to the sin which it is designed to expiate. The sanction of the law cannot righteously be changed, either in the regular course of justice, or in the performance of a substitutionary process. There is, on this account, an insuperable necessity for a capacity to endure it in an efficient offering for sin. Without this as a radical feature of its piacular character, the oblation of it could be no atonement for iniquity.

The same truth, however, is made evident upon still plainer grounds. There is a generic and most obvious difference between our moral constitution and that of angels. Reasoning from analogy, there may and perhaps must be a difference as great between either theirs or ours and that of accountable beings who people other regions of the universe. While we know that our respective peculiarities of moral situation, and of modes in which moral feeling is produced and moral actions are performed, have placed us and angels under corresponding peculiarities of moral administration; the same principle may extend itself through all the worlds of the intelligent creation, and may originate as many varieties in the modification of rule and penal sanction, as there are globes and races of being in existence. This at least is certain, that there is a detachedness of one world from another, and an individual independency in every insulated order of moral agents, which make every globe, in a state of probation, complete within itself.

Let this, then, be borne in mind, and, along with it,

let it be remembered that the ends of expiation require its being made in such a tangible way as will give the amplest opportunity for the objects of it knowing both the fact of its existence, and the sensible manner in which the rigours and honors of the law are displayed by it,—and then how is it conceivable that a piaeular victim for our race could, with either propriety or efficiency, be presented any where but in our world, or could meaningfully occupy our place except by standing and suffering on the only punitive ground with which we have either concern or acquaintanceship? We can never have an experimental knowledge of the exact punishment which fallen angels undergo; nor can we obtain an accurate understanding of those circumstances in the promulgation, structure, and administration of the law they violated, with which the peculiar character and aggravations of their crimes are connected. The sufferings which are endured by them may be more intense, and may with a loftier effect display the purity of the lawgiver, than those which are apportioned to apostate men; yet they are sufferings with which we cannot properly sympathize, which in many of their ingredients are necessarily different from our curse, and which are entirely exclusive of at least two departments of our penalty. How then could an endurance of them by a substitute for man, or a punitive infliction upon him under the generic mode of moral government* which is individually adapted to the constitution of angels, answer with propriety the purposes of expiation, or be so sensibly beheld by us as to produce upon our minds a requisite impression of the sacredness and the vindictiveness of the divine law in its administration in our world. The scene of action would then be at so great a distance, that our perception of what transpired in it would be dim and indistinct; and, in consequence of our want of kindred with its inhabitants, and of our

almost entire ignorance of its very nature, it would, even with the clearest announcement being made to us of a piacular ministration for man having been performed in it, insuperably prevent our experiencing a sufficiently strong interest in the momentous occurrence. An arena of atonement so unknown to us, and so completely hid, by the intervention of clouds and darkness, from our penetration, would render the scheme of salvation developed and accomplished in it inexplicable to our minds, and would afford few excitements or none whatever to necessary adoration, faith, and love. It is the law as promulgated in our world with which an expiation for our race has exclusively to do. The victim employed in effecting it must therefore be presented on the earth, and must consequently undergo the only moral penalty with which the earth is acquainted,—the identical punishment which was originally threatened against human transgressors.

It appears, then, from a variety of arguments, that atonement requires the piacular victim to undergo the very penalty which is due to the original sinner. Neither the kind nor the degree of punishment, however, interferes with the question of its duration. One vessel may be of so small a capacity that, before it can exhaust a given quantity of fluid, it must be filled and emptied incalculably often; and another may have such a vastness of width and depth that it can contain a tenfold greater quantity at once. Were it even maintained that absolute degree as well as defined description in the penalty, were indispensable to the efficient execution of it upon a substitutionary sacrifice, there would be nothing in the doctrine which could tend to determine the period through which it was necessary for the sufferings involved in it to extend.

The eternity of human punishment is not an intrinsic

ingredient of the curse. It originates entirely in the quality and meagreness of the moral capacities of the transgressor. The act of apostacy so completely despoliated and remodelled the constitution of man, that, though previous to its commission there were free will and moral power in his soul, either to continue in a state of innocence, or to descend from it into a condition of impurity, no inherent possibility now exists of its being purged from its defilements, or restored to its pristine sinlessness. The corruption which has entered it is possessed of such a reproductive and multiplying power that nothing, except the divine agency which operates upon believers, in virtue of an existing mediatorship, can withstand or counteract its influence. Lofty and solid embankments may be raised up to stem the current of its polluted waters, but it instantly tosses them down, sweeps every thing furiously before it, and covers a wider extent of territory with the filth and abomination which it amasses. It cannot in its energies be diminished or paralyzed by the agonies of inflicted wrath; but, in spite of them, or rather in splenetic excitement at the Judge who awards them, it continues and aggravates its deeds of depredation, and progressively lowers the subject of it in the quagmires of his sinfulness. The guilt which brings upon him the sufferings of perdition, will thus receive a regular augmentation, and will increase in the precise ratio of the period through which he has been punished. It will wring his soul with agonizing despair of ever being rescued from his torments, and, in proportion to the past duration of his misery, will make him growingly worthy of a sorer and more vindictive tribulation. There is, consequently, a progression of crime in a depraved moral constitution which must render the boundaries of penalty undefined and illimitable. It is in this single cause, away altogether from considerations

of quality or degree, that the eternity of human punishment has its origin.

The duration of a judicial infliction is thus determined upon grounds altogether foreign from the intrinsic nature of the penalty itself, and has a reference merely to the effect which the act of transgression produces upon the future moral character of its subject. It is manifest, therefore, that, in addition to the infinite mental capacity of the vicarious victim for man, and to his power of enduring in a limited period the highest degree of punitive retribution, there is sufficient evidence in the fact of his own immaculate sinlessness that, undergoing the very same punishment which is due to our race, his endurance of it cannot extend beyond a short and presented space of time. Sin when imputed can have no such effects upon the moral constitution as those which it produces when it is personally interwoven with the man. It rests merely upon the victim's head, and cannot, by any process or agency whatever, exert the most feeble influence upon his heart. It lies, besides, upon an individual who is intrinsically and spotlessly holy now, and whose moral character will be strictly unimpeachable and infinitely pure for ever. The very same reasoning, therefore, which proves that punishment in a demoralized and personally polluted sinner will be eternal, shews that when it is undergone by a sinless substitute, it must be limited in the period of its duration.

We are at liberty, then, to return to our original position, and to assert, on the evidence of the various considerations to which we have referred, that efficient expiation requires the sustaining and bearing away of the same species of punishment which is merited by human guilt, and that the victim which is presented by a well-qualified High Priest must be capable of undergoing it. It must be a partaker of genuine manhood; and it must endure

the penalty in its various parts, as it inflicts itself upon the mind through the medium of its united body, as it produces a separation between the two component parts of the human constitution, and as it exerts a specially sore and wrathful energy immediately upon the soul. These are the different departments of the curse as it was originally denounced against man, as it is actually undergone by those who remain unbenefitted and unredeemed by the mediation of Christ, and as it was inflicted upon the Saviour in the performance of his sacrificial work.

In the Old Testament scriptures, there are two leading words employed to designate the sacerdotal offerings which were presented on the Jewish altar. The one, whose literal import is 'an ascension,' was applied only to those offerings which were purely eucharistical, had no direct concern with the making of expiation, and were composed of flour and oil and other inanimate substances; the other, in its occurrence as a verb, is generally rendered, in the authorized version, 'to sacrifice,' properly signifies 'to kill, slay, or shed blood,' and always denotes the act of immolating piacular animals. These were usually bullocks, lambs, or goats, and, when the offerer was too poor to furnish victims of such pecuniary value, were substituted by turtle doves or pigeons. In presenting any of them, it was indispensable to the piacularity of the oblation, that their blood should be shed, sprinkled round the altar, and sometimes used in a variety of additional ways. 'And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission.*'

The reason of such an uniform necessity for slaughter, lies in the universal reference which the curse has to the extinction of the sinner's natural life, and to his depriva-

* Heb. ix. 12.

tion of it by a judicial and violent seizure of death. In the great majority of instances, dissolution takes place through the influence of mere disease. This, however, is in consequence of the body having been mortalized by sin, and, in the experience of all who are not saved by the Saviour's blood, amounts to a driving of them away in their wickedness. Yet whenever death sustains the character of a punishment inflicted by any civil law of our world, it must be occasioned by a violent instrumentality. The person who undergoes it must be suddenly cut off in the midst of health and other circumstances which bid fair for the continuation of his life. There must be slaughter in some of its modifications, and a consequent effusion of blood. Without this, the death could not be regarded as a vindictive visitation.

It hence becomes necessary in a vicarious sacrifice for man, not only that the soul of its human nature should for a season be separated from the body,—but separated by a fell and wrathful infliction of vengeance. Its death must not be produced by the operation of an agency assuming no palpable appearances of indignation, and sliding softly and imperceptibly along in its movements. It must be brought round by an angry arrest of the victim in a moment of health, and must launch him from the world amidst the firmness and vigor of corporeal strength. Christ, therefore, was something more than obedient to death,—he was obedient even to the death of the Cross,—was driven away from the earth by one of the most torturing and ignominious instruments of capital punishment which have ever been invented or known.

It was by being crucified, then, that the Saviour underwent the first part of our penalty. The next ingredient of it,—subjection to the many pains which originate in the mutual subserviency of mind and body, and in the connexion of both with the curse which rests upon the

ground,—can be realized only by an exposure, prolonged through a series of years, to the physical evils of the earth. In order to his bearing it, the Redeemer spent upwards of thirty years in the world, and, throughout the whole of them, laid himself open to the afflictive influence of hunger, thirst, fatigue, poverty, and all the other ills which sin has entailed upon the guilty. It was in regard to such things that he became eminently like his brethren, and trod the very ground which had been accursed for man's sake. His sufferings, in respect to them, were as truly sacrificial, and as directly constituted a part of the punishment which he vicariously underwent, as those which were embodied in the more overt immolation of himself on Calvary. Though he has averted neither them nor temporal death from his people, yet he has evinced his piacular bearing away of both by neutralizing all their judicial bearings upon a believer, and by converting the one into a gracious and salutary means of discipline, and the other into a necessary and triumphant act of his transmission from a vain and perishing world, to the scene of his celestial and everlasting enjoyments.

These two ingredients of the penalty, therefore,—temporal death, and a complex endurance of physical evil,—were executed upon our Lord, the one in his crucifixion, and the other in the long course of manifold trial which preceded it. Nor is there any want of evidence that he equally underwent that department of it which has an exclusive reference to the mind.

This, in the case of the finally impenitent, is not awarded in the full extent of it till after death, and is realized by them throughout the countless revolutions of eternity. In the case of Christ, however, it was dispensed in companionship with the sufferings of dissolution, and was all expended at the moment of his yielding up the ghost. The limitation of his pains to a given period

preserved such an order in the endurance of it from every appearance of impropriety. Were it not for the endlessness of their perdition, and the want of power in an embodied spirit merely human to sustain its whole weight, it might, in the experience of the unredeemed themselves, be all undergone upon the earth. The priority or posteriority of it to dissolution can affect neither its own nature, nor the bearing of it in answering the ends of justice; and, in respect to the suffering individual himself, must be a matter of perfect indifference. In the sinner, weakness of mind and interminable punishment prevent its exhaustion and even the commencement of it in all its latitude, while he is in the body; but, in the Saviour, mental ability to sustain it on earth in all its tremendousness, and a necessity of his entering the heavenly sanctuary to complete his propitiatory work, occasioned its entire absorption contemporaneously with his death. ‘And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.’ ‘And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’† ‘Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.’‡

Both in Gethsemane and on the Cross, there was obviously a direct outpouring of vindictive wrath upon his soul, and an incalculable augmentation of the pains which he had hitherto endured. His agony, from its intense and pungent excruciation, and from the wild energy with which it wrung and contorted his mental sensibilities and

* Mark xiv. 33, 35. † Mark xv. 34. ‡ Lam. i. 12.

powers, appears to have been a species of suffering of the nature of which all our various miseries, experienced in the present state of being, enable us to form no adequate conception. It seems to have been so strictly peculiar that, in regard to a capacity of sympathizing with him, as well as in respect to actual companionship in his exposure to it, 'he trod the wine-press alone,' and was wholly unaided, unaccompanied, and uncompassionated by men or angels around him. It was entirely irrespective of those sufferings connected with another part of the curse which were simultaneously affecting his body, could not have been occasioned by any influence operating through the medium of his corporeal organs, produced a confounding and overwhelming of spirit proceeding from the felt and storming anger of fiery tribulation in the soul, and was manifestly created by the iron-handed grasp with which avenging justice had seized, for a season, immediately upon his moral nature. And his awful and unexampled cry on Calvary,—what was it but an intimation of the reddest and most tempestuous of all judicial wrath,—'banishment from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power?' 'O my God, my soul is cast down within me. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.*' 'The waters are come into my soul: I sink in deep mire where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.†' 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in

* Ps. xlii. 6, 7.

† Ps. 1, 2, 20.

the night season, and am not silent. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint : my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.*

The very punishment which was denounced against human transgression at the first promulgation of the law, was thus, in all the departments of it, fully executed upon the Redeemer. This fact is conclusive proof that he was amply possessed of the capacities which are requisite for enduring it, and that, in respect to them, he was a victim completely qualified to make an atonement for sin. In order, consequently, to our seeing the whole extent of his sacrificial character, and to our perfectly discovering the source in which the peculiar virtue of his oblation had its origin, we further require to examine only another of his properties as a victim,—

III. *The Moral Dignity of his Person.*

This does not refer merely to his perfection of personal purity, but likewise to the paramount excellence of his nature, to the superior place which he occupies in the scale of being, to his moral grandeur as Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh. Unstained holiness of heart and life, and a capacity to suffer the same penalty which is due to man, are, as we have seen, indispensable qualifications; but neither of them singly, nor both of them combined, can impart that richness and worth to sacrificial blood, which will empower it to wash away the sins of many.

The expiation of Christ, it is to be remembered, is

* Ps. xxii. 1, 2, 14, 15.

not confined, in its design or sphere of action, to any such meagre object as the redemption of a single or insulated individual. Were this the sum of its proposed result, it is supposable that a moral being of the same rank in creation with the sinner, were he dislodged from his own accountability as a moral agent, and invested with the other necessary qualities of a victim, *might* have a sufficiency of worth to suffer effectively as a substitute. No such dislodgment, however, can possibly be accomplished; no subject of moral agency can be freed from an entire debtorship to the law for himself; no accountable creature can perform an *opus operum*, or possess any redundancy of merit which might be devoted to the moral service of another; no created being but man can strictly act under the precise administration with which a particular work for our race has to deal; no individual of ourselves is exempted from the pollution which incurs the curse, and paralyzes every effort for removing it; and thus no created agent whatever is either invested with the qualifications, or placed in the situation which are indispensable to his sacrificially occupying the room of only a solitary sinner.

In the single consideration, besides, that not one but innumerable multitudes are to be saved by the expiatory process, there is sufficient evidence, that the victim employed in it must possess a height of personal dignity, and a vastness of moral influence, which far exceed our proper comprehension. The injury which the oblation of it is intended to repair, includes the daring defiance given to the law by the high-handed revolt of numberless millions, the demoralization which they have perpetrated upon the pristine excellence of their moral constitution, and a long accumulation by them of the most offensive and putrid masses of moral abomination. An amount of mischief so incalculably extensive, amassed by the deli-

berate wickedness of ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and hurled at the throne of the holy and wise and gracious God, could never, by any possibility, be counterbalanced by the combined performances of the noblest and most gifted of created intelligences. Such a supposition is utterly romantic—it is preposterous—it is wild. Yet all this world of evil must be deluged, a compensation to the law must be rendered for it, by the shed blood of a sacrifice which is sufficient for its removal.

The mere effort fully to estimate or understand an evil of such prodigious dimensions, would manifestly far out-strain the strongest powers of the most gigantic intellect of creatures. Where, then, amidst the bewilderment of an overpowered endeavour to comprehend it, could the ability be found to accomplish its destruction? Where? Not assuredly in the great but little mind which has cast and sunk and lowered its longest plummet of thought in the mighty moral ocean, has a thousand times been baffled in its efforts to sound it, draws up in utter hopelessness its line of amazing length, and, in the weariedness and abandonment of its vain attempts, exclaims, 'O the depth!' To imagine that a mind can roll away an ocean which it cannot fathom, overturn a mountain which it cannot measure, annihilate a globe which it cannot bestride, expiate sins which it can neither calculate in their number, estimate in their enormity, nor comprehend in their deserts,—to imagine this, would be wildness and folly in perfection. None but God can perceive the awful extent and the stupendous mass of violence which was rolled against his law by the rebellion of intelligent myriads; and none but he, connecting himself in some mysterious manner with the requisite passable humanity, can possess an adequacy of moral worth and grandeur for rendering an atonement for it efficient.

The truth of this is obvious from the manner in which the inspired writers have narrated the history of our Lord's humiliation. If the sacrificial efficacy of his expiation had originated, as has sometimes been affirmed, in the mere intensity of the sufferings which he underwent, it is inconceivable that whenever they speak of his peculiar character, the evangelists and apostles should have described his pains in language so gentle and unimpassioned, and should have so uniformly dwelt with such ardor and expatiation upon the subject of his personal dignity and glory. They always appear to be entirely absorbed in the contemplation of his moral majesty, and seem throughout to view his sufferings as a subject of secondary and subordinate importance. Every opportunity is embraced by them of running into episodes and parenthesis upon the former. The latter, however, even when it naturally presents itself in their way, is passed over by them without the excitement of any outpeering regard, or specially strong emotion.

Even when they professedly connect his pains with his atonement, they almost never speak of them alone, but interweave their descriptions of them with references to the divinity as well as the manhood of his person. 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.'* 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.†' 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow saith Jehovah of Hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand

* 2 Cor. viii. 9.

† Phil. ii. 5—8.

upon the little ones.* A portraiture is drawn of him as he appeared and displayed himself in the world; yet, while it arrays him in the lowliness and meanness of apparel which was thrown round him in his incarnation, it at the same time exhibits him as the ancient of days, whose garment is white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool, whose throne is like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.† His human nature and his divine are treated in conjunction. The union of them in his mediatorial person is regarded as the assumption of his properly sacrificial character. But it is chiefly by an exhibition of the latter that he is held up to our view as an efficient piacular victim.

The sufferings of Christ, it is true, were, as we have already shewn, indispensable to the worth of his expiation; yet, both from the manner in which they are treated in the word of God, and from their obviously limited nature, they manifestly formed neither the entire nor the principal cause of its efficiency. They were not, as those have frequently supposed and argued who believe them to have been the quintessence of the atonement, strictly infinite in their degree. That they were excruciating beyond conception, and constituted the endurance of the same species of penalty which is due to man, is indisputable; but that they either were the exact amount of what would have been everlastingly endured by the saved if they had been left to perish, or were properly infinite in themselves, is not to be believed. From the thorough contrast of moral character in sinners and the sinless substitute, it is impossible that a parallel can be drawn between what was undergone by the one, and the eternally augmenting agonies, springing from a regularly increasing guilt, which would have been inflicted on the other.

* Zech. xlii. 7.

† Dan. vii. 9.

common principle exists by which they can be meaningfully compared; nor, in consequence of this, can any premises be found from which a conclusion equally applicable to both might be fairly drawn.

Even, however, if such a common principle could be discovered, and if, in virtue of it, an attempt were made to equalize the absolute amount of suffering endured by the Saviour and of that which would have been eternally awarded to his redeemed, there is sufficient evidence, in the circumstances both of his passion and of the perdition of the lost, that infinitude can be affirmed of neither. The tribulation of the impenitent will, no doubt, be eternal; but it nevertheless has not been always in existence. There is a time, in the experience of all, when it commences, a time before which it was a nonentity,—a proof that, in one respect at least, it is subject to limitation. It is confessedly proportioned, in its intensity, to the character and guilt of the transgressor, and, in regard to those who have died in the earlier ages of the world, is longer in continuance than in respect to others who have departed in the later. Yet, were it in reality infinite, it could neither be longer in duration, nor greater in degree, in one case than in another. In reference, consequently, to its endurance by individuals, the notion of its infinitude is altogether visionary.

Nor is the idea more sober when it respects the combined sufferings which were due to all for whom Christ shed his blood. The pains which would have been realized by each, capable as they would have been both of an earlier commencement and of an augmentation of their bitterness, could have been nothing more than finite; and, just as no imaginable amount of units can constitute a sum which cannot be increased, no supposable multiplication of these finites by numbers far exceeding the actual multitude of the ransomed, could possibly raise them into

an infinite. To speak, therefore, as many do, of sin being an infinite evil, committed against an infinite God, deserving an infinite punishment, requiring for its expiation the sustainment of infinite sufferings, and borne away by Christ purely because he possessed an infinite nature, is, to say the least of it, but a 'darkening of counsel by words without knowledge.'

This, nevertheless, is the argument which is uniformly employed to parallelize the agonies of the Redeemer with those which, without his interference, would have been everlastingly endured by his people. It is an argument, however, resting on false grounds, perfectly senseless in itself, and refuted besides by the facts of the Saviour's history. The period of his humiliation was short, and such as could easily have admitted of protraction. However pungent the anguish was which he underwent in it, no conceivable reason can be assigned why it might not have been prolonged, not only for a meagre but even for an indefinite space of time. Yet the prolongation of it during but a single additional moment, would have been a real augmentation of its amount, and would have given incontrovertible proof of its destitution of infinitude.

Although, besides, it was Immanuel who constituted the victim, and although we ought not, when speaking of any of his mediatorial performances, to make an absolute separation in our minds between the two natures which were united in his person; yet it is manifest that his Godhead and his humanity were wholly unamalgamated, that his divinity was necessarily impassable, and that his manhood was the exclusive seat of actual suffering. There could not, in any conceivable way, have been communicated, either to his body or his human soul, any of the divine capacities or attributes; nor, in a matter which intrinsically and entirely belonged to itself, could the hypostatical union be such as to confer upon it a

powers or prerogatives of infinitude. While it was evidently upheld and strengthened in such a manner by the divinity as to make the sacrificial act, like every other which was performed by him on earth, strictly predicable of his mediatorial person, there could not, without the preposterous supposition of a transference to it of qualities which are incompatible with mere finitude, have been such a support afforded it as could have empowered it either to sustain or accomplish a thing which is properly infinite.

The very idea, in fact, of an infinitude of suffering is utterly unmeaning; and when it assumes the form of a belief that the sacrificial pains of Christ were precisely equal to the accumulated and endless miseries of thousands of millions in the bottomless pit, it is perfectly revolting. It then not only makes no conceivable account of the surpassing moral grandeur of his person,—that feature of his piacular character on which prophets and apostles expatiated with such frequency and pathos; but it likewise goes far to deny the entirely moral nature of his atonement, and affirms it to be of worth only because he possessed a physical capacity to endure in an eminent degree what can be undergone by even the inferior animals. It must acknowledge them to be as truly capable of enduring pain as he was, and, when they undergo it in a sacrificial way, must, if consistent with itself, view them as in some measure at least qualified to atone for moral guilt.

This doctrine is hence completely irreconcilable with the creed of those who hold it, and with the word of God itself, respecting the thorough worthlessness of the typical offerings under the former dispensation. Although the lambs and bullocks which were presented on the Jewish altar, were destitute of moral agency, occupied a place in the scale of being vastly lower than that which

belongs to man, and, in consequence of this, must have been made greatly less account of than those for whom they became substitutes; yet, in their immolation, they suffered all the pains which accompany the extinction of animal life by a violent instrumentality, were slaughtered with the express design of their death being expiatory, and, if piacular virtue be entirely or even chiefly derived from a victim's sufferings, must have been capable of atoning for moral iniquity as well as ceremonial. The reality, quantity, accumulation, and sacrificial nature of their pains, must have neutralized the effects of their wanting both moral dignity and moral character. One individual's sufferings would have had a small yet real influence upon the purgation of a worshipper's conscience, and, if followed up with a sufficient number of additional slaughters, would have united with them in ultimately securing his entire acquittal from moral condemnation. The countless thousands, the multitudes of animals which were sacrificed, from the commencement of the economy till its close, would thus have carried forward the temple services to some grand and saving termination, —they would have poured from the altar a stream of sacrificial virtue, swelling and augmenting through every successive generation, and sweeping away before it the guilt of many a transgressor. When, consequently, the word of God declares, in the face of all this, that 'it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins,'* we are compelled to infer that, just because moral dignity was wanting, all the accumulation of suffering which had been amassed was utterly and absolutely powerless.

This inference is applicable not merely to the sacrifices of the Jews, but likewise, if we lose sight of his moral

* Heb. x. 4.

grandeur, to the oblation of Christ. If all the conglomerated sufferings of the former were inexpiatory, the many pains which were endured by the latter could not be the source of his atonement's value. The notion, besides being fallacious, is degrading. It strips his piacular work of all its moral glory, and extracts from it the most essential of all its ingredients,—a perfect obedience to the law, and an exemplification as well of the excellence of its precepts, as of the purity and vindictiveness of its sanction. To make an end of iniquity, everlasting righteousness must be brought in. A suitable expiation must develop a surpassing moral goodness, and, while it embodies enough of suffering to illustrate the deserts of sin, must chiefly accumulate a sufficiency of moral worth to make it a righteous thing with God to rescue, on the ground of it, the multitude of the saved from condemnation, and to bestow on them the manifestations of his complacency. The object of it is to bring the Deity before us as 'the just God and the Saviour,'—'just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.' Its obediential nature is hence completely incompatible with the idea either of its having redeemed men merely by its agonies, or of its having embodied a sum of pain coequal in degree with the miseries that were eternally due to the saved. This consideration, therefore, unites with the others at which we have glanced, in expelling from a scriptural creed the doctrine of the Saviour's atonement having been efficacious in virtue only of the intensity of his sacrificial agonies.

Nor is the doctrine more solid, though held by many, that the worth of it was merely the result of a divine appointment. Without this, it is true, an attempt at a work of expiation would be grievously presumptuous, and could never meet with that divine acceptance of it which

is indispensable to the transmission of its results to the sinner. If, however, nothing more than this were required, there must have been a redeeming effectiveness in the blood of all the Levitical sacrifices which were of an expiatory nature. The whole of them were made in consequence of a communication from heaven which imparted the directest authority for the act of presentation, detailed in the minutest manner the various departments of the ceremony, described the different qualities of an eligible victim, was given with an impressiveness of outward circumstances highly fitted to invest it with a deep and overawing solemnity, and contained the fullest instructions respecting both the person of the officiates, and the altar and sanctuary where they should conduct their ministrations. No divine appointment could be more complete, or could more perfectly legislate the various performances requisite to the accomplishment of its design. If, consequently, nothing additional were necessary to render a work of expiation successful, it is not for a moment to be doubted that the blood which was shed on the Jewish altar actually effected the moral purification of the soul. Notwithstanding, however, the divine origin of the ceremonial institution, and in spite of the minuteness, perfection, and solemnity with which it divinely appointed its many atoning services, 'it was only a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things, and could never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.'*

The same objection which overthrew the former notion of an atonement's efficacy originating in suffering, is thus as obviously subversive of the idea that it is merely the consequence of God's appointment. The latter doctrine,

* Heb. x. 1.

in fact, is decidedly the most objectionable of the two. It as completely as the other divests the expiation of its strictly moral character, destroys the necessity of its having embedded a vicarious obedience, strips it of the properties by which it 'magnified the law and made it honourable,' denies the existence of its intrinsic and absolute moral excellence, and represents it as a work which, if God had willed it, might have been effected by the meanest action of the most insignificant of agents.

It does more. It flings an alarming reflection upon the wisdom and goodness of the Deity, assassinates the essential principles of his moral government, and overturns the most important doctrines of the gospel. Why, if an atonement is effectual purely by a divine appointment, did God erect such an expensive machinery for making it? Is it not an essential character of wisdom, that it gains its purposes by the easiest and cheapest means? Is not prodigality or needlessness of expenditure a certain proof either of indiscretion, or of want of capacity accurately to calculate the cost of an extensive undertaking? Does it not partake of the ridiculous to institute an instrumentality out of all proportion with the magnitude of the end? Will not a man provoke contempt by expending a sum upon an enterprize which known principles evince to be a thousandfold greater than his designs require? Where then is the display of God's wisdom, or where rather are the means for averting the manifestations of its opposite, in the plan which he has formed for the redemption of the guilty? Nothing could be more stupendous than the work of atonement as it actually exists; nor could an apparatus more costly and magnificent have been constructed for performing it. The second person of the adorable Trinity became incarnate; the Lord of glory submitted to be despised by men and reproached by the people; Jehovah's fellow was smitten and slaughtered

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with the sword of God; heaven from above was moved, and hell from beneath was shaken;—and all this to accomplish what rested entirely on a mere act of the divine will,—what, if the Deity had chosen, might have been effected by the poorest agency he could have named! Is this consistent? is this reconcileable with infinite wisdom? The idea is absurd,—it is not to be cherished for a moment.

But does it harmonize better with God's goodness? Can it extract from this favorite attribute of creeds which so fondly prefer men's theories to the assurances of inspiration, this source to which all run for argument to vindicate their avowed or virtual disbelief in the other divine perfections,—can it extract from even this a plea for its support? Were the infliction upon Christ, when he had actually assumed our nature, of such dreadful sufferings, the exposure of him, during the whole period of his humiliation, to such appalling ignominy, and the ultimate subjection of him to a death so shameful and agonizing,—were these more compatible with goodness than his incarnation was with wisdom? Had it even been necessary for him to appear on earth, nothing but dispositions in fearful contrast with the love which the Father evidently bore him, could ever have occasioned his descent to such depths of shame and tribulation. It would have been enough that he made his appearance among men, declared to them the intention of his advent, proclaimed himself the Saviour of the world, and obtained the God-head's appointment of this simple mission as an efficient source of pardon and eternal salvation to the guilty. This would have been perfectly effective; and all beyond it, all his subjection to reproach and pain, could answer no additional purpose, and must have sprung from some principle of cruelty which it is blasphemous to affirm of God.

Even less, indeed, than Christ's mission might, on the assumption of the doctrine to which we refer, have served the ends of expiation. A divine institution derives its positivity from nothing in itself, but rests exclusively on the will of the Deity. His counsel has an inherent stability; and the development of it is certain solely because it is the fulfilment of his pleasure. The mere act of appointment is dependent on nothing beyond itself; and, in its constituting therefore the origin of redemption, it was under no necessity of making the matter of it consist in either the advent or the agency of the Son. It might have deputed a created agent, it might have chosen even one of our own race, to the work of our salvation, and might have invested either his deeds or the sheer repentance of the sinner himself with a peculiar power to exterminate guilt. The divine will, if expressed respecting these or any similar deeds professing to be for man's redemption, would have been equally real as when uttered regarding the humiliation of the Saviour. Any supposable action whatever, had it only been appointed by God to expiate iniquity, would thus have been in every respect as valuable as all the combined facts of our Lord's sacrificial history.

This, we contend, is a fair conclusion from the doctrine. And is it possible for any thing to make a more complete subversion than this does, both of the truths of Christianity, and of the principles of God's administration? It saps the very foundation of the gospel, and throws to the wind all the lofty ideas of the Bible respecting the demands of justice, the vindication and display of uncompromising purity, the dreadful enormity and deserts of sin, and the stern vindictiveness of the penal sanction of the law,—ideas which interweave themselves with every principle that ministers to the safety and well-being of a moral government, which frown upon

the vagaries of a mind that dares to insinuate against their fundamental importance, and which erect an insuperable barrier in the way of their being interfered with by any conceivable transaction,—ideas which spurn away the thought of the will and moral glory of God ever coming into competition, affirm the impossibility of a mere volition or act of appointment doing away the evils of man's apostacy, and demand as indispensable to their destruction the display of a surpassing moral grandeur in a slaughtered sacrificial victim.

We are carried back, then, to our original position, that the necessary incomprehensibleness, by any other than an infinite mind, of all the bearings of man's apostacy, and the remarkable way in which the inspired penmen treat of the Redeemer's moral glory on the one hand and of his sufferings on the other, furnish sufficient evidence that it was the peerless dignity of his person as 'God manifest in the flesh' which rendered his oblation efficacious. It is fundamentally essential to a work of expiation for man that it be at once piacular and propitiatory. But this it could not be, unless the victim occupied such a high place in the scale of being, and were so deeply venerated by the different orders of intelligences who might witness or contemplate his substitutionary performances, as would immediately secure the universal recognition and applause of the uninjured justice as well as magnified mercy of God, in forgiving the sins of those for whom he died.

Now such is the immeasurable enormity of human sin, and such the tremendous amount of it, that no created being can be regarded by his fellow-creatures with whom he associates and who form an estimate of his powers by comparing them with their own, as possessed of any adequate ability to make amends for it to the law of God.

It they view, on the one hand, in a light of unutterable magnitude and aggravation, and are overpowered with amazement whenever they contemplate or endeavour to understand it; and him, on the other, they can easily, in all his powers and actions, comprehend, and are never struck with an idea of the marvellous in any of his achievements. To the minds of all, there appears an utter disproportion between the vastness of an adequate piacular work, and any moral energies which he could call into exercise for effecting it. They cannot conceive him to have a competency of power for the destruction of sin, and could experience no consequent acquiescence in the remission of it on the ground of his interference.

In order, therefore, to an atonement securing their approbation and drawing forth from them an adoring admiration of the Almighty's doings, the victim offered up in the making of it must possess a greatness of power and moral glory which surpass and astonish their comprehension more than the mighty mischief itself which he exterminates. If no created mind can measure the dimensions of an evil which everlastingly ruins successive generations of a whole world's rational population, which deranges and despoliates the moral government of God over an entire district of his universe, and which originates those moral fulminations of the Omnipotent the full thunder of which none can understand; then it is not to be supposed that he can discover in any of his fellow creatures a nature so immense, capacities so measureless, and actions productive of such prodigious results, as either to constitute a subject equally baffling his comprehension, or to establish an agency in which confidence can be placed for repairing the boundless devastations of the monstrous evil. It was not, therefore, till angels saw a victim set apart which was a possessor of divine dignity and absolute infinitude that, in surveying the salvation of sinners as the result of its

immolation, they connected the free exercise of mercy with a luminous display of vindictive and vindicated purity, and, perceiving how mercy and truth had met together, and righteousness and peace embraced each other, exultingly exclaimed, 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will toward men.'

This, then, conjoined with the arguments which have already been advanced, makes it plain, that a degree of moral grandeur which cannot be found in any creature, is necessary to give effectiveness to an expiation, and that the victim which was offered by Christ, acting as a High Priest, required to be possessed of Godhead as well as of humanity. Neither the manhood singly, nor the divinity, was presented on the altar, but both in a state of distinct yet intimate and mysterious union. He who endured the curse in our stead was at once a poor despised Nazarene, and the Supreme Being who made, and who governs the world. He was both the Son born and the mighty God.

The divinity, it is true, could not, on account of its necessary unchangeableness and impassability, undergo the slightest alteration, or endure the least painful emotion; yet, all the while that the manhood suffered, it was closely united with it, and both fully upheld it amidst the agonies of the oblation, and, by accompanying its endurings with the influence of its own infinite dignity, co-operated in the piacular performance. No distinction is made, in the inspired accounts of the atonement, between what was effected by the one nature, and what was accomplished by the other; nor is it ever hinted that there was either a real or a virtual separation of them during any part of the sacrificial ministration. They existed, throughout the whole of his lifetime on earth, in that state of intimate union into which they entered at the incarna-

tion; and both together, in this personal unitedness, constituted the victim which was sacrificed by the Saviour.

The death which he underwent, though it did not and could not affect his Godhead, was as real as that of any mere man. There was no annihilation of any thing but animal life; and this was only the separation of the divinity and the rational soul from the human body. A man ceases as such to exist, and becomes really dead, whenever the mind takes its flight from the corporeal frame. His soul, so far from being altered in its substantial nature, or enervated in the strength and elasticity of its powers, remains the same intellectual essence, and starts up in the possession of a new and expanded vigor. The fact, however, of its continuing unaltered and in everlasting existence, makes no imaginable reduction from the reality of the man's decease. Nor, upon the same principle, can the certainty of the divine nature of Christ being necessarily immutable, interfere with the literality of his death as Immanuel. His body became as truly lifeless by the disjunction from it of his Godhead and human spirit, as that of any of our race does in the disuniting of it from the soul. Then the person of Immanuel ceased as such to exist; and, without the shadow of a change having taken place upon his divinity, the connexion was dissolved between it and his proper manhood, and, in the same sense of the word as when it is applied to us, he was actually dead. It was thus strictly in his mediatorial person,—the humanity enduring the inflicted suffering, and the Godhead exerting upon it the influence of its moral glory,—that he underwent the curse, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

The union of his divine nature with his manhood, could not possibly affect the essential properties of either. In the complex constitution of man, the soul is as truly a

spiritual substance, and as completely contains the faculties and performs the operations of pure intellect, as though it were in its disembodied state. By its connexion with the body, however, it invests those actions of the individual which are accomplished through the instrumentality of the corporeal organs, with qualities of which they would be entirely destitute in the inferior animals. Many things are done by them and us in common; and though, in respect to their outward properties, these are undistinguishable in respect to their twofold origin, yet, as they respectively proceed from us and them, they are intrinsically of totally different natures. A man-servant and a domesticated brute may both seize upon the midnight depredator who attempts to carry off their master's property, or they may equally interpose between the suspended sword of an assassin and the person of their proprietor, and may alike avert it from his head by leaping forward and receiving it into their own body. The external actions, the muscular instrumentality of performing them, the personal fatigue or woundedness or death resulting from them, would in the case of either be essentially the same; yet, in respect to the former, they would have an inherent importance and a character of moral intellectuality of which they would be thoroughly destitute as accomplished by the latter. The deed of the man, and the deed of the animal, while materially identical, would be as morally different as the natures of the two agents themselves. In the doing of them, neither can experience a neutralization of either the generic qualities of his constitution, or the peculiar stimulants of rationality on the one hand and instinct on the other by which he is actuated. The man, though brought upon the same arena of acting as the brute, still thinks, deliberates, resolves, and performs as a purely intellectual being. His mind is connected with his body merely as employing its nerves and muscles as

the means of effecting the purposes of its volitions; and the body is affected by the mind only as it receives from it an influence by which its movements can be predicated simultaneously of intellect and organic matter. When, consequently, an action is done by him which might, in the sheer outward ingredients of it, have been performed by one of the inferior creation, it is invested with all the characters of at once an animal and an intellectual deed.

It is, we apprehend, in such a way as this that we are to view the sufferings and death of the Redeemer as affirmable strictly of his mediatorial person. The things themselves, in as far as the *material* and not the moral qualities of them are concerned, might have been and actually are endured by mere men. A purely human being might, as truly as the Saviour, have undergone shame and spitting and reproach, and suffered the pains of physical evil through a lifetime, and the agonies of crucifixion and of immediate wrath upon the soul. The action, however, though materially the same, and proceeding from a similar mental and bodily organization, would have been as far inferior in its intrinsic properties and value to Christ's, as mere manhood is beneath Godhead and humanity hypostatically united. In him, it was exclusively the human nature that underwent the sacrificial sufferings. Yet the divinity was all the while in close and personal union with it, and, though itself unaffected and impassible, dictated the pains which the humanity endured, and concerned itself with them in all the intimacy and interest of personal agency. They consisted, in reference to their proper and material nature, of the very ingredients which compose the penal sufferings and death of man; and, in regard to their moral character and worth, they were mantled with the infinitude of excellence and the boundlessness of moral grandeur which are necessarily connected with the agency of God. In

their *materiel*, they were the offspring of manhood; in their *morale*, they are predicable of divinity; and, in their entire nature and sacrificial bearings, they can be affirmed of Immanuel,—of the Godhead and humanity in their mysterious personal union. ‘Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.’* ‘And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth; and John seeth him coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.’† ‘He who was in the form of God, and took upon him the form of a servant, became obedient to the death of the Cross.’‡ ‘Who being the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, by himself purged our sins.’§

It is thus, then, that the atonement of Christ is seen to be both real and efficacious. It is real because he was enabled to suffer the exact penalty due to our guilt; and it is efficacious on account of its moral worth having originated in the divine dignity of the victim. His sacrificial properties were such as wonderfully to concentrate every power and capacity which were requisite for harmonizing the numberless considerations that pour themselves in from every quarter upon the question of expiation. All the many and high demands which were made upon him in his substitutionary amenability, he had the amplest ability to answer; and, bringing as he did a divine glory to the altar, and investing with it the peculiar pains which he underwent, there was an atoning richness

* Acts xx. 28. † John i. 14, 29. ‡ Phil. ii. 6, 8. § 1

in his blood which is not and cannot be subject to any limitation.

This, we know, is denied by some. There are persons who believe that the sufficiency or intrinsic worth and the efficiency or actual productiveness of the atonement, are strictly coequal. Such a doctrine, however, is highly derogatory to the glory and all the perfections of the Redeemer.

It is not denied by those who hold it that the victim was not the mere manhood of our Lord, but, in the full sense of the word, his mediatorial person; nor is it matter of doubt with them that, in his death and in all his other proceedings as Immanuel, his Godhead was unchanged, and was as supremely infinite in all its deeds and manifestations as previous to the incarnation. How then, in consistency with this, can it be conceived that in those displays of its moral power and glory which were made in his mediatorial performances, any more than in those of his formerly creating and governing the world, it was essentially confined within given bounds? Does it argue a measurable power in God that none of the works which he has done are in themselves absolutely measureless? Is the exertion of a defined amount of strength a proof that the possessor of it has acted up to the utmost stretch of his capacities? Does the emanation of a limited stream of glory furnish evidence that the source of it, if more widely opened, could not pour forth a manifestation of it tenfold greater both in its splendour and its quantity? Are we to believe that, on account of God's having made our earth just of its existing figure and dimensions, he might not, if he had chosen, both have given it a different form, and created it a thousand times its present size? or that, because the stars are computable in number and are all called by their names, he could not

have hurled over the measureless field of space millions of additional worlds? or that, in virtue of a limitation in the magnitude of his actual creation, there is a corresponding limitation in the perfections which are manifested in its formation, preservation, and government? No. That which is actually done does not always indicate the full extent of faculty even in a finite intellect, and in the infinite mind, it can never determine it. There is, in the very nature of things, a disproportion between the inherent attributes of God, and the active exercise of them in his procedure. All his works are necessarily bounded and rendered finite by his purpose. To affirm that the actual exertion of his power in making them was exactly commensurate with his power itself, is to declare that his omnipotence is limited, and that his energies were unequal to the creation of a more extended universe. The thought is utterly blasphemous. It meets with the just abhorrence of all.

Why, then, is it not abhorred in its application to other parts of the divine procedure, as well as to his conduct in the works of creation and supreme government? Was the divinity of the Saviour less divine when united with his manhood, than it was previous to his advent to our world? If it be sinful to equalize the intrinsic and effective value of his perfections in his upholding all things by the word of his power, is it not just as revolting to equalize them in his reconciling all things to himself by the peculiar shedding of his blood? To do this consistently, either the influence of his Godhead upon the atonement must be denied, or an assumption must be made that, in consequence of its personal connexion with a human nature, it was robbed of its infinitude. This, however, is to abandon every correct view of his character, and to throw away all the doctrines of the Bible respecting his true divinity, and its origination of the val

expiation. If he was truly God while he was really man, and if his sacrificial person was constituted by the two natures in distinct and intimate unitedness, the worth of his death must have been infinite by the same necessity that the sufferings of it were merely finite. The latter properly belonged to his humanity, and were therefore subject to limitation; but the former proceeded strictly from his divinity, and on that account is absolutely boundless.

In every divine act there is an infinitude of agency on the one hand, and a finitude of effect on the other. The cause which produces them is capable of effecting an indefinite multiplication of its productions; but it is limited to a prescribed amount of performance by the sovereign choice of the divine agent. In the creation of our world, there was no exhaustion or diminution of omnipotence. Either by the very same fiat which commanded its existence, or by another immediately subsequent, a thousand accompanying globes might have been conjured into being. That which drew a compass round the creative power was nothing either in itself or in the nature of its effects, but solely that controlling purpose of the Deity in consequence of which it was called into exercise. Without a previous determination, it would never have been exerted; and with it, a definite work was delineated as the sphere and quantity of its operations.

In the order of nature, there is a necessary priority of volition to exertion,—of resolution to action; and in the essential properties of a purpose, there must be a determination to act, and a mental definition of what is to be done. Both things are especially true of God. As the first cause of all existence, and as an agent totally independent in his procedure of every thing beyond himself, a decree in the order of nature must necessarily precede each of his actions; and as a Being whose perfections are

infinite, who can never be hedged round in the number, repetition, or greatness of his deeds, who has some explicit end to serve in every separate part of his career, and one of whose performances can never so exhaust his capacities as to preclude his production of others, there must, in each of his purposes, be a resolution, not only to act, but to act both in a certain way, and to a definite extent. It is thus that, while he resolved to create the worlds, he contemporaneously determined to make them of a given multitude, magnitude, and order. It is thus, too, that in all his proceedings we see at once a boundlessness in his intrinsic power and glory, and a limitedness in the actual consequences of their display.

Now by applying these principles to the Saviour's atonement, we will discover that, in virtue of its being predicable of his divinity as well as of his manhood, the intrinsic worth of it is of necessity altogether unbounded, that no derogation is made from its unlimitedness by the fact of its partial efficiency, and that the very considerations by which this is proved evince that it is nevertheless confined in its actual productiveness by a divine decree. It held the same place in regard to the salvation of souls that the almighty fiat did in respect to the creation of the world. The one was the instrument of God's moral and the other of his physical power for effecting the fulfilment of previous determinations of his mind. Without a preceding purpose, the former no more than the latter could have existed. It was in consequence of a resolution to make the earth that the fiat was called forth; and it resulted from a wish to save men that the Son became incarnate, clothed the sufferings of his humanity with the moral influence of his divinity, and thus made an expiation for sin. Both the physical energy of the one, and the moral power of the other were intrinsically infinite; but as divine acts, and as the offspring of

a defining decree, they were with equal certainty placed under sovereign limitations. If the one had not been circumscribed,—if it had not been appointed to bring into being a world of specific shape and dimensions, there could have been no creation; and if the other, upon the same principle, had not been determined to save a given number of individuals, there could have been no atonement. The investiture of the fiat with absolute omnipotence necessarily required a decretive definition of its intended effectiveness to secure its speaking a precise and limited universe into existence; and the encompassment of the reconciliation with an infinitude of moral grandeur and value, equally needed a similar circumscription in order to its saving a finite number of fallen creatures. As a manifestation, consequently, of the perfections of God, the worth of the atonement was the fruit of a decree, and was both unbounded in itself, and limited in the intended amount of its results.

The actual and the effective value of the Redeemer's death are thus to be carefully distinguished. The one respects its abstract and inherent properties; and the other refers to what it was designed efficiently to accomplish. This confines the blessings of it to an ordained number of individuals; and that constitutes the warrant for their being offered to all. The former accrues from its native origination in a divine agency; and the latter results from its necessary connexion with a divine purpose. The one shews that with regard to sufficiency, Christ died for the whole world; and the other evinces that in decretive intention, he died only for those who are actually saved.

By Arminians, we are aware, this distinction between intrinsic and effective worth is denied, and universality by intention as well as in abstract sufficiency is maintained.

On many accounts, however, this doctrine of theirs is not only untenable but alarming.

If, as they suppose, it was the mind of God that every individual of our race should be saved by Christ's blood, he must have formed either a conditional or an absolute resolution that universal salvation should be accomplished. To suppose it conditional is to make the Supreme Being dependant for the fulfilment of his intentions upon the will of his creatures, and to throw a stumbling-block in the way of his redeeming men to any extent whatever. He is an agent whose will cannot be influenced by any thing beyond himself. The thing which he produces has no existence before he commands it to stand fast. It derives its very being from his determination to create it. Before, therefore, his physical or moral power is exerted to effect his will concerning it, there must exist a mould into which the production is cast.

There is an impossibility in a thing first being made by another, and then, after its formation, determining of itself the shape and size in which it is to exist. The very creation of it as necessarily imparts its magnitude as its being. The only way in which the condition of its extent can be shewn to depend upon itself, is to furnish proof that there is the same dependance on it for its existence. Yet this is a position which, so far from being capable of evidence, is either perfectly unmeaning, or, if sense be given it, is utterly revolting. It robs the Deity of his power to act irrespectively of the expressed or virtual permission of his creatures, empowers them to decide how great or how little shall be his performances and whether the glory he derives from them shall be partial or complete, places the fulfilment of every part of his intentions at the mercy of their caprice, and even invests them before they ever actually exist with authority to determine whether they shall be created. As well, there-

fore, might it be affirmed that the world had a control over the fiat which made it, as that men have the power of negating a divine purpose of universally redeeming them. The Saviour's atonement is the moral fiat for accomplishing the new creation, the salvation of their souls. Hence, parity of principle requires that if the authority by which the effects of it were limited proceed from them, the influence which hedged round the physical fiat, and made it bring into existence a globe of definite size, was not a controlling resolution in God, but some superior energy in the world itself.

It is thus that the doctrine of an universal conditional purpose is filled up with impiety. It exhibits God as putting forth an agency for producing an unlimited effect; and represents him as depending for the accomplishment of what he designs by it upon the very things which he either naturally or morally creates. The purpose of the Deity, it says, is universal; but it is overruled by the purpose of the creature, and, in respect to human redemption, is sported with by the caprice of man, and confined, at his depraved and puny pleasure, within any bounds he may choose to dictate.

Nor are the consequences less shocking which result from the notion of an universal *absolute* intention. Either hypothesis has to contend with the acknowledged fact that only some of our race are actually saved. An unlimited conditional decree digests this fact at the expense of giving the will of the creature a supremacy over the will of the Creator; and an universal absolute purpose can make away with it only by affirming a deficiency in either his wisdom or his power.

If God absolutely determined to save all, why are not all really saved? and how can it be shewn that 'his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his plea-

sure? * The atonement itself has been proved to be intrinsically sufficient for effecting the entire work. Why then does it fail to accomplish all to which it is adequate, and every thing for which God designed it? Either, in spite of its transcendent worth, there must be a want of adaptation in it to the circumstances of man; or else there must be a fatal powerlessness in the agency by which the results of it are transmitted to the sinner. Nothing can defeat a firm determination,—and especially in a Being * with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,†—but either his wanting power to carry it into execution, or his not properly suiting the means to the end. The one would be a finitude of moral strength, and the other a destitution of infinite wisdom, the very thought of which it is impious to associate with the name or the procedure of the Deity. Whatever he intends he will assuredly perform. Had it, therefore, been in reality his design that the Saviour's atonement should save the whole of our race, his intentions would have been fulfilled to the utmost, and all the world would have certainly been saved. 'Hath he said it, and will he not do it? hath he spoken it, and will he not make it good?' 'He is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him.‡' 'With him is wisdom and strength: he hath counsel and understanding. Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.'§

The idea of an intention either conditional or absolute to save all, is inconsistent, in fact, with the very nature of the atonement. It was a purchase, and a purchase implies

* Isa. xlv. 10.

† Jam. i. 17.

‡ Job. xxiii, 13, 14.

§ Job. xii. 13, 14.

choice and definite quantity. It was the purchase of a church, and a church means a select number of individuals taken from a multitude, and separated to the evangelical service of God. 'Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.' What has been bought continues no longer in the right of its former possessor, and cannot henceforth be held by him without a violation of every principle of equity. Previous to the act of redemption, those for whom the Saviour shed his blood had the law for their proprietor; but subsequent to it, they legally and exclusively belong to himself. On believing the gospel, they are actually transferred to him, and receive the Spirit as 'the earnest of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*' They are regarded as the property of Christ, a possession to which he will not relinquish his claim, over which he watches with the most jealous care, on which he impresses the sealing of the Spirit marking it for his own, and which he will ultimately convey to a place in heaven where he intends everlastingly to preserve it.

Is it to be supposed, then, that after all a part of what the Redeemer bought will be withheld from him? Is it to be imagined that those sacred principles of fair dealing which lie at the foundation of all morality, will be practically disregarded in a transaction so important as that of Christ's negotiating with the moral laws of the universe? Shall it be said that 'the precious price of his blood' was paid for a possession part of which is wrested from his hands? Was it not explicitly for *the church* that he died? and is it not affirmed that his dying for it makes a necessary implication of its entire actual salvation? 'Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might

* Eph. i. 14.

sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.*

It may be thought, indeed, that since redemption is a figurative idea, it is inconclusive to argue the truth of an abstract doctrine from the evidence of a metaphor. The figure, however, is confessedly intended to describe the nature of the atonement, and is understood by all parties in the same sense. It beautifully explains the manner in which salvation is accomplished, and more fully illustrates the bearings of the piacularwork than could have been done by any literal phraseology. Whatever, therefore, is essentially incompatible with the leading idea of the metaphor, must be inconsistent with the doctrine which it teaches. When, consequently, all figure is laid aside, the notion of a purpose to save all is as inharmonious with right views of atonement, as when it is employed.

The expiation was radically a substitutionary endurance of the penalty due to the sins of man. Christ, in making it, underwent what was awardable in law to sinners, and both bore their iniquities, and fully suffered their punishment. As a surety, he liquidated all the debt which they had contracted, answered every claim which the law preferred against them, and, in their stead, satisfied all the demands of justice. In this, he acted both as their substitute and their representative, and, in their name, obtained from God an attested and final discharge from all the consequences of their guilt. Intentional redemption, and actual salvation, must hence be strictly commensurate. If it be otherwise,—if but a single individual perish whose guilt was really atoned for, there will be a twofold exactiōn of the dues of justice,—an execution of

* Eph. v. 25—27.

the merited penalty upon both substitute and principal. Christ both would, and would not have removed the curse; the law would have at once regarded, and not regarded his death as a satisfaction; and God would so fearfully relinquish all the equitable principles of his administration, as to demand afresh a payment which had been already made and accepted.

On this assumption, too, Christ must be viewed as the Saviour of multitudes whom he never saves, and must be regarded as having delivered many from the wrath to come who will undergo the outpourings of wrath through eternity. 'God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* His saviourship, in the agency of it, is declared to have consisted in the shedding of his blood, and, in its practical consequences, is affirmed to involve a participation of divine favor, and a rescue from eternal ruin. Yet none of the finally lost will either receive the one, or be delivered from the other. And is Christ nevertheless to be seriously viewed as their Redeemer? To be a Saviour, it is to be remembered, is not to bear a name, but to perform a work. Yet where are the circumstances, possessions, or privileges of the everlastingly condemned which intimate that any work of salvation has been accomplished for them? In the language, it is true, of the authorized version, the Scriptures call God 'the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe;† but it is to 'the living God,' or to the Divine Being in his absolute character as ruler of the universe, and in reference to his work of providential preservation, that they apply the epithet. They view the

* Rom. v, 8—10. † 1 Tim. iv. 10.

primitive Christians as 'labouring and suffering reproach,' exhibit them as exposed on every side to hazards and death, and represent them as nevertheless trusting in the Deity who, while he is 'the preserver of all men,' exercises an especial care over believers. In the hourly facts of every man's and insect's history, there is ground on which such an appellation can be given to the Godhead; but where in all their lifetime either here or hereafter, are the circumstances which will warrant Christ's being named a moral Saviour in reference to the finally impenitent? An empty title is substantially a mere burlesque, and can never, in his own word, be assumed by the Supreme Being. As a Creator, our Lord brought an universe into being; as a Preserver, he upholds it by the word of his power; as a Judge, he will investigate the character, and pronounce the destiny of the righteous and the wicked; and as a Redeemer, he will deliver all for whom he died from guilt and condemnation.

The scriptures, accordingly, represent him as having died for his children, his sheep, his friends, and his people,—specifically for those who are put in actual possession of the blessings of redemption. 'For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*' In the context of this passage, Jesus is spoken of as having become incarnate for the subjecting of all things to himself, as having assumed human nature for the suffering of death, and as having taken on him the seed of Abraham for executing a work of expiation. Yet, in the whole of it, the saving design of all this is studiously confined to his brethren, the Church, his children, and the sons of God; and not a single reference is made either to men universally, or to

* Heb. ii. 10.

those of them who are left to perish in their sins. In the clause 'that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man,' by which this assertion may seem to be contradicted, there is nothing in the original answering to the word 'man.' The adjective 'every' stands unconnected with any expressed noun, and must be determined, in the reference of it, by the nearest substantive in the context. This, by the acknowledgment of some Arminian writers themselves, is the word 'sons' which immediately follows, and cannot, as our translators supposed, be 'man,'—a word which occurs nowhere so near as to warrant its being taken for the antecedent. In harmony, therefore, with the spirit and expressed statements of the entire chapter, Christ is here declared to have died exclusively for the children of God,—to have 'tasted death for every son.'

Allied to this is the testimony of Caiaphas when, as High Priest, he received a divine afflatus, and spake by the spirit of prophecy; 'Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.'* But are we, it may be asked, to listen to the words of so vile a person as Caiaphas, or, though we did, are we to suppose that by 'the people' he meant those only who will ultimately be saved? Assuredly; for 'this he spake not of himself, but being High Priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that he should also gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.† Not only does this aver the Saviour's death to have had objective concern pointedly with God's people; but it likewise declares it to have been identified with his gathering them together in one,—language, as we are else-

* John xi. 50. † Verses 51, 52.

where taught by an apostle, which includes vastly more than mere conditional salvation, which can never be employed in reference to the impenitent, and which is descriptive of the eternal glorification of those who believe. 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, that in the dispensation of the fulness of time, God might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.'* The extent of the atonement is thus measured by the amount of its results; its intended productiveness is co-extensive with the number of the really redeemed; and the making of it had respect, not to the whole world, but to God's children scattered abroad among the nations.

Upon the same principle, consequently, that he is said to have died only for his sons, Christ declares that he laid down his life for 'his sheep.' 'I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.†' The name which he thus gives to his constituents, is applicable to none but our Lord's followers, and, in a significant manner, portrays their character as contrasted with that of the impenitent. These, in contradistinction to them, are, in other parts of the divine word, called goats, dogs, and wolves. Wanting the name, they are also destitute of the nature, dispositions, and privileges of the Saviour's flock. They know not his voice; they do not follow him; they cannot be rescued

* Eph. i. 7—10.

† John x. 11, 14, 15, 27, 28.

from perdition; and they will never be partakers of eternal life. This is true of them just because, in connexion with their constitutional depravity and their actual guilt, they were passed by in the purpose of divine mercy, were left to reap the bitter fruits of their entailed and personal sinfulness, and were unredeemed by the expiatory shedding of Christ's blood. 'Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.'*

No restriction could be more pointedly expressed than this,—a restriction which manifestly confines the intentional efficacy of the atonement to a definite number, views these as prospectively invested with all the rights and characters of practical redemption, regards them as having been legally and inalienably held by our Lord in the abstract performance of his sacrificial work, roundly affirms a connexion between the permanent unbelief of others and their exclusion from that flock for whose sins an expiation was made, and plainly establishes the exact commensuracy of purposed and actual salvation. All who were redeemed will certainly be renewed and justified; and all who continue to disobey God, and remain in unsubdued impenitency, give evidence that they are not of those whom Christ befriended and saved by the sacrifice of his life. 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.'†

This, then, we must feel ourselves compelled to regard as the doctrine of God's word. It rests on a number of

* John x. 26.

† John xv. 13, 14, 16.

the most explicit statements of inspiration; it is supported by correct views of the abstract principles of atonement; and, to a mind unmanacled by system, and comprehensively expatiating on the whole truths of God, it is vindicated by the very texts which are usually quoted for its confutation.

These, we are aware, are numerous; but, without a single exception, they are all announcements either of the unlimited *sufficiency* of the expiation, or of the universal call of the gospel which it originates. None of them either throws a doubt upon those restrictions of intentional *efficiency* to which we have been referring, or contains the shadow of an assertion that the atonement was *intentionally* made for every sinner of our race. They are chiefly those in which all men are commanded to repent, God is declared to have loved the world, or Christ is said to have given himself a ransom for all. To enumerate the whole would be needless: a mere specimen is amply sufficient. 'As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*' 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish but have everlasting life.†' 'God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.‡' 'The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.§' 'The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'||

* Rom. v. 18.

† John iii. 16.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

§ John vi. 33, 51.

|| 2 Pet. iii. 9.

These are among the leading passages which are urged against the doctrine for which we are contending. Not one of them, however, conveys even in appearance an idea in the remotest way inharmonious with the texts which have been illustrated. They announce nothing but the freeness and fulness of the divine mercy, are perfectly silent or at best indefinite on the subject of its effective objects, and contain a virtual concession that, while such things are revealed for us and our children, and for bringing the gospel into contact with every one who is 'ordained to eternal life,' there are secret things and secret purposes belonging to the Lord, which draw a compass round the actual productiveness of the atonement. To suppose them the language of other sentiments, is to array them in hostility to Arminianism itself. They must either be a mere instrumentality for savingly impressing the truth upon 'the children of God scattered abroad' among every class and community of men; or else they must be a repeated assurance, not that the Saviour died by design for the entire world, but that all mankind will be actually saved by his blood. The judgment by Adam comes literally upon all his posterity; and, if this be regarded as the point of parallel between him and the Redeemer, the free gift will not only be placed within the reach of every person's voluntary acceptance, but will effectively 'come upon all men unto justification of life.' Instead, therefore, of our being taught that the first and second Adam were both public heads, that they represented, the one all mankind, and the other those of them who are eventually delivered from the curse, that the latter's remedy is as efficient as the former's mischief was fatal, and that each conveys the fruits of his representation to the whole of his constituents,—instead of being taught this, which is obviously the doctrine of Paul; the notion will be forced upon us, in the face of facts, of a

thousand declarations of scripture, and of the Arminian creed itself, that not a single man or woman shall ever perish. This is the only conclusion which the premises will warrant,—a conclusion which evinces that the zeal of some men for universal redemption, lands them, to their dismay, in the wild tenet of universal salvation.

Arminianism on this point is, in fact, merely a kind of extended Judaism. It draws its most specious arguments from similar misapprehensions of inspired statements, and is exposed and refuted by precisely the same considerations. The Jews imagined that, because the promises of eternal life were addressed to their whole nation, every Israelite who did not sink into idolatry or infidelity, would be saved. Arminians argue that, on account of an universality in the offers of mercy to mankind, there is efficiency as well as sufficiency in the blood of atonement for every son and daughter of man. The one mistook the outward benevolence of God to the entire people, for the manifestations of his special and redeeming favor: the other identify his general goodness in the Christian constitution, with a supposed intentional provision for the deliverance of all from sin. The former forgot that 'they are not all Israel who are of Israel': the latter recollect not that 'many are called but few are chosen.' Both launch themselves into error by confounding the outward characters of the respective dispensations, with that defined and controlling will of God, which regulates their administration, and determines the amount of their effects.

The one economy is substantially, and in all its bearings upon the soul's wellbeing, the same as the other. Where they differ, it is not in the doctrines they teach, in the ends on which they bear, or in the agency of accomplishing redemption, but solely in the exclusiveness or universality of a right to their ordinances, in their prospective

or retrospective reference to the work of expiation, and in the cumbrousness or simplicity of their means of grace. The Christian dispensation is just to the world what the Mosaic economy was to the descendants of Abraham. The one is merely an universalization of the other. Both are intrinsically one, are alike pervaded with a restriction of divine purpose, and equally affect their limited designs by wearing an external indefiniteness of aspect. The one preached repentance to every Israelite, but actually bestowed it on none but the children of promise; and the other proclaims an amnesty to every sinner of mankind, yet pardons only those 'whose names were written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* The former said to the millions of Jews who perished, 'God hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew;' the latter tells the multitudes of every nation who continue in impenitency that 'they believe not because they are not of the Saviour's sheep.' Both affirm that, notwithstanding the unrestrictedness of the offer, the actual reception of it 'is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;† and each declares that the few who are 'called and chosen and faithful,' are 'a remnant according to the election of grace,‡ and that the many who are called and answer not, are rejected 'that the purpose of God according to election might stand.'§

Now just in the same way that a Jew reasoned from the one economy to universal Israelitish salvation, do the Arminians argue from the other to universal human redemption. The promises of mercy are announced, said a Judaizer, to all the posterity of Jacob, and hence God has formed and will certainly execute a purpose to save

* Rev. xiii. 8.

† Rom. ix. 16.

‡ Rom. xi. 5.

§ Rom. ix. 11.

every unexcommunicated Jew: the offers of pardon, reasons an Arminian, are addressed to all the descendants of Adam, and the Deity has therefore intentionally redeemed every sinner of our race by the Saviour's blood. The latter differs little in the nature of his inference from the former, and, in regard to the respective extent of his premises and conclusion, he is the less consistent reasoner of the two. They stumble, however, with equal fatality upon the very threshold of their argument, and should alike feel themselves reproved and corrected by the apostle's comment on the spirit of the divine administration. Jews are reminded by him, that 'they who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed;*' and Arminians are memorialized, along with them, that an universal call and an universal purpose are things essentially different, and that, while the one stands prominently out in the gospel, God, in respect to the other, 'hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.†' The inference of Judaism, and the inference of Arminianism, while drawn from the same description of premises, are both made from them at the expense of utterly sweeping away their genuine import. They equally confound the secret and overruling purpose of God, with the external and expiatory means which he adopts for effecting it; and, in virtue of such a radical mistake at the very outset of their argument, they alike carry themselves to an untenable conclusion.

That this is true in regard to Judaism, Arminians will be amongst the foremost to concede; yet, in yielding the concession, they substantially abandon, not directly perhaps their doctrine itself, but all the grounds at least on

* Rom. ix. 8.

† Verse 18.

which they attempt its vindication. Let them denounce the Jews for inferring the salvation of every outwardly devout Israelite from the general promises made to their nation; and, in the very denunciation, they condemn themselves for assuming the universality of the offers of pardon as a proof that, in respect to decretive efficacy, the Redeemer died for all mankind. If a particular decree confined to given individuals the actual efficiency of overtures made annunciatively to the entire people, it must, with equal certainty, draw limits round the real productiveness of calls addressed to the whole world. Its existence is adduced by Paul as conclusive evidence of the total error of the Judaizers,—evidence which operates just as decisively against the correctness of Arminianism. It was in the mere oversight of it, that the blameworthiness of the Jewish argument consisted; and with this oversight, men are equally chargeable in maintaining universal redemption, and universal salvation. What makes the one doctrine a wrong inference from a general call of mercy, is the very thing that evinces the error of the other. The Judaistic and the Arminian creeds are thus overthrown by the same instrument of refutation.

The universality, therefore, of the mere proclamation of pardon proves nothing against the doctrine for which we plead, but, on the other hand, accumulates indirect argument in its support. It shews the perfect parallelism of the former economy with regard to the nation, and of the present dispensation in respect to the world. And who, after the plain and repeated statements of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, will venture to dispute that there was a presiding purpose in the Mosaic constitution; which, through the medium of the very undefinedness of its overt announcements, circumscribed the saving blessings of it to a destined few? The assumption of this is

the pervading master-principle of the apostle's reasonings with the Jews. They quarrelled with his expositions of the divine word, and flung away the doctrines which he taught, merely because their tendency was to show that multitudes of Israelites were rejected. This, they supposed was a contradiction of those promises of mercy which were nationally made to the posterity of Jacob, and was consequently an idea on which they frowned with indignation. To shew them their mistake, the apostle distinctly proves, from the spirit of the economy, that some were necessarily left in unbelief, produces evidence in the facts of its establishment and entire history of an intentional limitation by the Deity of actual salvation, and affirms that those who were cast away, were all of them 'vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.' He hence conducts them to the conclusion, drawn from a series of events all illustrative of the control of a defining purpose over the general promises, that 'Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded.'*

Such is the account which inspiration gives of the Jewish dispensation; and it is an account which must equally apply to the existing economy. The nationality of the one dispensation, was essentially the same thing as the present universality of the other. The principle, therefore, which proves that the national offer was purposely limited in the saving effects of it only to certain of the Israelites, shews that the universal offer is destined, by the surest determination of the Almighty, to be efficient to none but a definite and predestinated number. It is the will of God which primarily resolves, in the case of any one who hears it, the question of its acceptance. 'Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,'† is the abstract

* Rom. xi. 7. † Jer. xxxi. 13.

reply which the sinner gives to the entreaty, 'Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die.*' He is, doubtless, addressed as a free agent,—and, as an active being, and one who possesses a conscious power of choosing or refusing whatever is laid before him, he listens to the overtures of mercy; yet he is altogether influenced by depraved principles, has a rooted and sovereign antipathy to moral goodness, 'receives not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him, and cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned.†' When the light shines around him, he is commanded to admit its rays into his organs of vision; but 'he loves the darkness rather than the light, because his deeds are evil.‡' 'His carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.§' Before he can receive the testimony of the gospel, he must be made willing by the power of Christ,|| and must be worked upon by divine agency. It is the Holy Spirit who convinces him of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.¶ It is God who gives him repentance unto life.** He is born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.†† God begins in him the good work, and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.‡‡ He is saved by grace, through faith, and that not of himself; it is the gift of God.§§ By grace, says the believer, I am what I am.|||

The influence, therefore, by which the command to repent and believe is thrust home upon the sinner, is not to be found in himself, but is communicated entirely from heaven. Man is spoken and reasoned with as a rational, deliberative, and accountable being; yet, till the truth be disclosed to him by divine illumination, and, in all its

* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. † 1 Cor. ii. 14. ‡ John iii. 19. § Rom. viii. 7. || Ps. cx. 3. ¶ John xvi. 8. ** Acts xi. 18. †† 1 Pet. i. 23. ‡‡ Phil. i. 6. §§ Eph. ii. 8. ||| 1 Cor. xv. 10.

evidence and power, be divinely impressed upon his mind, he can perceive no motive for giving it his assent. He possesses free will; but he cannot, by any possibility, have the slightest liking for any thing that is encompassed with an atmosphere of purity. Between things which are evil he can perfectly choose; but to choose between moral evil and spiritual good, he has no inherent power. He is in absolute ignorance of the real character of God; all his affections are interwoven with the pursuit of sin; he is 'led captive by Satan at his will;'* 'he chooses none of God's counsel and despises all his reproof;'+ 'the god of this world has blinded his eyes, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into him;† and not by his willing or his running, but by God's shewing mercy, he is quickened from his death in trespasses and in sins.‡ Still, however, he is, with all this, addressed as an intelligent, living, active, and voluntary agent. No warrant is given him for laying himself down as a passive piece of mechanism,—for helplessly stretching himself on the banks of Siloam, without an effort to convey himself to its waters. It would be perversion and fatalism for him to reason that, as a machine, he must be motionless till the moving power be applied to his wheels,—that, as a decrepid invalid, he must listlessly lie and gaze upon the agitated waters, till some one come and plunge him beneath their healing waves. The agency of his salvation is divine; but the instrumentality of it is human. The efforts of man are the very medium through which the Deity puts forth his physical and moral power. It is he who makes the earth yield her fruit, and who imparts the fertilizing blessing to the ground by which it produces nutritious vegetation; yet he exerts his agency upon it merely through the ploughing, sowing, and combining

* 2 Tim. ii. 26. † Prov. i. 25. ‡ 2 Cor. iv. 4. § Eph. ii. 1.

agricultural labours of the husbandman. He may often see it proper to leave the farmer's operations unacknowledged, to withhold the exertion of his power along with them, and to mark them all with inutility and abortiveness; and he may, on the other hand, give both sunshine and rain from heaven, may declare and manifest his readiness to embue both with a fructifying efficiency, and, through the husbandman's neglect to till and dress and manure the soil, may apparently be defeated in the accomplishment of his overt though never of his secret purpose. The agriculturist may often plough and sow in vain; yet it is only in ploughing and sowing that he is ever successful. These are the only means through which God has pledged himself to work. With them, he frequently does not give his blessing; but, without them, his agency can never be expected.

Now it is in a similar way to this, that we are to regard the administration of grace. In providence, God fertilizes whatever extent of ground he will; he is the sole agent in fructifying the earth; and he exerts his power upon it only through the medium of agricultural labour. In the gospel, he alone gives conviction, repentance, and faith; he bestows salvation upon just whom and how many he chooses; and he shews mercy to none but in connexion with their sense of its value and their desiring its possession. All husbandmen he calls upon to cultivate the ground, and all sinners he commands to repent; yet neither the former nor the latter become all partakers of his blessing. From the labours of many an agriculturist, he withholds the full accompaniment of his manifested power; and to many a sinner, he denies the graces of contrition, faith, and regeneration. All of both classes are called, because their attention to the command is the medium through which any become the recipients of his bounty; yet only some of either class

he actually blesses, because it remains with his mere good pleasure to determine the persons and the number of his eleemosynaries. Neither the sinner nor the agriculturist can experience his agency without attending to the universal call; and either may hear it, and may give a partial audience to its statements, and never be enriched with the concomitant mercy. The one is enjoined to cultivate the soil, and, in obeying the precept, he is blessed in his deed; the other is commanded to 'believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and, in looking to the Lamb of God, it is given him to believe on his name. 'Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' He receives it entirely as a divine gift, and could never, without 'the operation of God,' come to partake of it; and he nevertheless goes actively in search of the object of it, does not passively wait for a divine afflatus, turns his eye immediately to Christ, and, in a direct enquiry for salvation through his blood, obtains the end of faith, the salvation of his soul.

In perfect consistency, therefore, with a general invitation to the Cross, with an universal injunction to repentance, and with the unbeliever's free agency, personal acting, and use of appointed means, the actual production of penitence and belief is exclusively the work of God. The very nature of his administration, and of the medium through which his moral and saving power is exerted, forbids a limitation in the external call, demands the universality of its invitations, and clearly proves that the moral efficiency of the command is from God, that a secret purpose exists for controlling and circumscribing the fulfilment of the promise appended to it, and that 'he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and hath compassion on whom he will have compassion.' While, therefore, necessity and the medium through which God operates, require the offers of mercy to be made to men

freely and without restriction, they are only those who 'have been appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,'* 'chosen in him before the foundation of the world,'† 'and predestinated to be conformed to his image,'‡ whom he actually and effectively calls to the knowledge of the truth, to the experience of the new birth, and to the heirship of the everlasting inheritance; 'Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.'§

It is thus apparent, that the work of salvation is divine, that the influence which presses home the overtures of pardon to the sinner is from above, and that the acceptance of them must hence depend upon an existing purpose which superintends the universal administration, and marks out the individuals in whom the Holy Spirit shall effectually operate. The extent, therefore, of the divine purpose to save, is not ascertained by the mere announcement of pardon, but by the conferment of the heavenly influence by which it is believed. The power of faith is as truly from God, as the command is for possessing it. If, along with the command, he does not in every instance give the power to obey it, this must result from a proportionate limitation in his saving designs. The extent of his determination must be measured, not by the outward aspect of the economy, but by the inward efficiency which pervades it. Its announcements are merely an instrumentality adapted to the peculiar circumstances of man: the saving energy which proceeds from it, is a divine agency commensurate with the intended exertions of the Deity. The universal offer is only an electric wand carried round the world, and suspended over every nation of the earth: the Spirit's operation is a movement in it

* 1 Thess. v. 9. † Eph. i. 4. ‡ Rom. viii. 29. § Verse 30.

which brings it into contact with a given number of individuals scattered amongst the mighty multitude. The one is the mere instrument, which tells us nothing of the purposed amount of its effects: the other is the actual forthputting of the cause, which settles the exact extent of what was determined to be done. Every aspect, consequently, in which the universality of the gospel call is correctly viewed, so far from shaking, obviously tends to establish a belief, that its efficient bearings are all circumscribed, that a manifest intimation is made by it, from its parallelism with the external aspects of both the Jewish economy and the providential administration, of a secret purpose to limit and particularize its effects, and that the intentional efficacy of the Saviour's atonement is to be measured solely by the number of persons who are 'washed and justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'

A sufficient answer is thus furnished to Arminian objections. To prosecute the consideration of them to any further extent, would be merely a waste of words. Enough has been said both to prove and to vindicate the truth, that, in the purpose of God, as well as in actual efficiency, our Lord shed his blood for only a definite number.

Now when this doctrine is viewed in connexion with the fact, of which previous evidence was given, that in respect to intrinsic worth, his sacrifice was infinite in itself and abstractly sufficient for the redemption of all, how luminous is the illustration which it affords of the order, beauty, and consistency of the divine procedure toward men, and how perfectly does it harmonize the apparently conflicting truths that Immanuel was the victim, and that yet only some are saved by his immolation,

—that mercy is preached and proffered to all, and that it is nevertheless extended to merely a destined few!

On the Arminian hypothesis, or on any other scheme whatever, these facts are absolutely irreconcilable, confusion is thrown into the system of God's administration, and some one attribute of his nature is exalted at the expense of derogating from the rest. But, standing on the doctrines of intentional limited efficiency, and of inherent boundless sufficiency, let the enemies of the Cross throw at us whatever missiles they choose, we can easily, dauntlessly, and unhurt, dash them all aside. Why is pardon offered to every sinner? It is that the proclamation of it may be heard by the 'ordained to eternal life' scattered among every kingdom, people, tongue, and nation under heaven.—Since the remedy is adequate for every son of Adam, wherefore is it withheld from so many millions? It is denied them because it is sovereign in its origin, springs from the unprompted and unmerited love of God, and is circumscribed in its application by the purpose of his own good will.—Is it not a tantalization of men, and a virtual mockery of their miseries, to address overtures of reconciliation to all, while all are not empowered to accept them? The dispensation of the gospel is itself a blessing, alleviates on earth the ills of even those who continue in impenitency, carries along with it a saving energy to many, and is not chargeable with the self-originated depravity, guilt, unbelief, and wretchedness of the rest.—Does it not detract from the infinitude of God's benevolence to rescue only some from perdition, when, if he had willed it, he might, by the same provision, have delivered all? A sovereign gives no account of any of his matters, displays his clemency in the mere commutation of a criminal's penalty, magnifies it in the total forgiveness of one culprit of a million, surpassingly aggrandizes it in raising an offender from the prison to

the peerage, makes it marvellous in adopting a traitor as his son, and would be charged with sacrificing every good quality to one by giving life and liberty and grandeur to all the felons in his realm.—Is it not inconsistent with the divine veracity to hold out salvation to the world, when he secretly intends to circumscribe its actual conferment? The Deity every where promises life only to such as believe, nowhere pledges himself to bestow it upon the impenitent, never says that all will be possessors of it, always distinguishes between the outward offer of it and its real participation, and plainly intimates that the preaching of it is ‘the savor of death unto death’ as well as ‘the savor of life unto life,’ that ‘many are called but few are chosen,’ and that those only receive it whom he has elected from eternity, and to whom he grants repentance unto life.—Does not the statement of a particular purpose defeat the ends of the universal call, and needlessly intimidate and perplex the ignorant? ‘Secret things belong unto the Lord, but the things which are revealed to you and to your children.’—Is not the fact of limited efficiency a matter of revelation, and a truth which discordantly goes along with the unrestricted announcement of pardon? The gospel contains no enrolled list of the elected, says nothing which can intimate who among an audience are ‘vessels of mercy,’ leaves the eventual faith or unbelief of the whole to prove their being chosen or rejected, and preaches peace to all for the purpose of eliciting the salvation of the one class and the impenitency of the other.—How can God, in concordancy with this, be said to love the world? It was for the world as such that he sent his only begotten Son.—Can it be consistently affirmed that his love is commended? The commendation of it is made to believers in their receiving the reconciliation.—Where is the principle of harmony between the universal call, and the particular restriction of

redemption? It lies in the intrinsic sufficiency of the atonement which gives boundless expiation to the one, and in the intentional efficiency of it which imparts precision and limitation to the other.—Are not these conflicting elements in themselves? They are both true of the same expiation, and are found in every manifestation of divine attributes.—How does their co-existence in the atonement manifest God's righteousness? In its going before his face to set us in the way of his steps.—How his equity? In his awarding to the impenitent the due retribution of their original and actual sin.—How his sovereignty? In his bestowing, from his free choice, eternal life upon the predestinated.—How his patience? In his bearing with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.—How his wisdom? In balancing upon the faithful and the unbelieving the respective displays of his goodness and justice.—How the harmony of his perfections? In justice and judgment being the habitation of his throne, while mercy and truth go before his face,—in his being 'the just God and the Saviour,' the avenger of the impenitent and the author of salvation to the chosen,—in his being the Lord God merciful and gracious, all the while that he will by no means clear the guilty. 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

The view then which we have taken of the Saviour's sacrificial character, or of those properties which he possessed as a piacular victim, carries us forward to the con-

* Rev. xxi. 3, and xxii. 11.

clusion, that he answered every demand of purity by his immaculate holiness, that he conferred aggrandizement on the law by his perfect substitutionary obedience, that he met the special requirements of its penal sanction by undergoing the very punishment which it had denounced against human transgression, that the worth of his sacrifice originated neither in a divine appointment nor in the intensity of his sufferings but solely in the moral dignity of his person, that in sustaining the penalty as well as in obeying the law he was strictly Immanuel, that his atonement is intrinsically sufficient for all but intentionally efficient only to some, and that, in its forming the basis of God's administration in the gospel, there is a brilliant and harmonious display of all the divine perfections. Such is a summary view of the sacrifice of Christ. And what a luminous disclosure does it make of the symmetry, beauty, and grandeur of the apparatus of redemption! 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and untraceable his ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.'

SECT. IV.

The Moral Results of the Atonement.

In order to complete the view which we have been giving of the piacular function, it may be necessary, after

having looked at the abstract work of expiation itself, to bestow a short while's attention on its moral results. These, as was stated at the outset, are, in general, the removal of guilt from the individuals on whose account it was performed, and the reinstatement of them in the favor of God. From this favor, they had fallen by their iniquities; and, in consequence of these having been, by imputation and by the vicarious endurance of the penalty due to them, borne away by the sacrificial victim, they are delivered from condemnation, and brought into a state of acceptance with the Deity. Yet as the curse which is thus removed is of a complex nature, and affects transgressors in a variety of ways, their peculiar rescue from it may be advantageously viewed in different points of light, and, in order to its being fully understood, requires to be seen in the various particulars of which it consists. While the atonement, in its practical bearings as a whole, has simply to do with the reversion of the sentence under which the sinner is placed; it concerns itself, in reference to the different parts of which the sentence consists, with the remission of sin in a justifying act, with a reflective influence upon the moral renovation of the heart, with an alteration of the legal qualities of afflictions and death, and with the resurrection and glorification of the body. These, we conceive, are things which are all included in its moral results. To each of them, therefore, we will give a few moment's attention.

I. The Remission of Sin in a Justifying Act.

This is so obviously a direct consequence of expiation, that we might almost pass it by without a word of either proof or illustration. It is an act in which there is a transference in law to the believing sinner of the righteousness which Christ as a substitute and a sacrifice

wrought out, and in which, in virtue of this, there is a neutralization of his guilt, and a treatment of him as a righteous person. It is, in many respects, an exact counterpart to the act of substitution. In the one, the Saviour, by assuming a vicarious and sacrificial character, and by having imputed to him the guilt of men, came to be treated as though he had been himself a sinner; and, in the other, sinners, by being made one with Christ, and by his obedience being placed to their account, come to be treated as though they had themselves perfectly obeyed the law. In the former, Christ became answerable for our iniquity; and in the latter, the transgressor reaps the fruit of Christ's righteousness. 'For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'* Substitution made him sin; and justification makes us righteousness. The one transferred our guilt to him; and the other transfers his obedience to us. The former entailed condemnation upon him who was not personally exposed to it; and the latter averts it from us who are both constitutionally and by actual sinfulness placed under it. The one is the result of his having been our sacrifice; and the other is the consequence of our having had him for our surety. The two acts, therefore, operate in precisely opposite directions, illustrate each the nature of the other, and constitute a mutual interchange of legal situation by the sinner and the Saviour.

There is hence the same reason for affirming the remission of sin to be a direct result of our Lord's atonement, that there is for regarding the sufferings and death which he underwent, as the consequence of his having stood in the room of the guilty. He was held by the law to be strictly, and in all their extent, amenable for the

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

sins of those whom he substituted. He concentrated the entire accountability of the whole community in himself. He was viewed as not only acting in their name, but as acting in such a way that they would be partakers with himself of the consequences of his conduct. When therefore he effectively and for ever removed, by his sacrificial sufferings and doings and death, the curse under which he was then representatively laid, they were, in common with himself, held in law to have 'died unto sin' in respect to its legal dominion, that they might henceforth 'live unto God' in the possession of a life on which his law can never again have demands.*

Now it is just the accomplishment, in actual experience, of what was then effected abstractly or in law, which constitutes the act of justification. By it, the union with the Saviour which was then only prospective or one of mere reckoning, comes to be practical; and what previously existed in nothing more than purpose or legal right, is, in consequence of it, turned into a historical fact, and becomes a matter of possession and enjoyment. There is, at the moment of it, a transplantation of the sinner from darkness to light, and from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of the living and true God. He is no longer viewed as affected with guilt, or exposed to its punishment; but is henceforward possessed of the titles, immunities, and privileges of a son of God. The results of the atonement having been transmitted to him, his sins are forgiven, his pardon is sealed, and his person is brought into the same situation with regard to the law that those of angels occupy who are confirmed in holiness. 'Being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also he has access by faith into the grace wherein he stands, and re-

* Rom. vi. 8—10.

joices in hope of the glory of God.* At the Saviour's crucifixion, he could not literally die with him, for he was not then in existence; but to that event he is virtually carried back in the hour of his believing the gospel, and is affirmed to have been then 'buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so he also should walk in newness of life.† By this death in law, he is freed from the penal dominion of sin; and by his accompanying legal resurrection, he is possessed of a life of acceptance with the Deity. Hence it is, that in his union with Christ in his substitutionary and sacrificial character, he is 'quickened together with him,' 'all his trespasses are forgiven him, and the hand-writing of ordinances which was against him, is blotted out and taken out of the way, having been nailed to the Cross.‡ It is thus that, in virtue of the Redeemer's expiation, and as a direct result of it, the sinner is pardoned, acquitted from the condemning sentence of the law, and pronounced to be a man of legal guiltlessness. This is the first moral result of the atonement. The second is

II. *A Reflective Influence upon the Moral Renovation of the Heart.*

Man, it is to be remembered, is both a guilty and a depraved being,—both legally and spiritually dead. Although his moral corruption is, in strict language, no part of the curse under which he lies, and cannot therefore be neutralized as an immediate consequence of expiation; yet the extermination of it is plainly necessary in order both to the completion of personal salvation, and to the continuance of the state of acceptance with God which com-

* Rom. v. 1, 2.

† Rom. vi. 3.

‡ Col. ii. 13, 14.

mences in justification. Depravity is a principle or lust in the heart which entices and draws a man into temptation, and which, when it has conceived, bringeth forth sin,* —a principle which, were it not thoroughly eradicated, would of necessity engender fresh guilt, and fling the justified subject of it back to his former state of subjection to the curse.

Now although, as we shall afterwards see, it is the province of the intercessory function both to root it out in a process of sanctification, and, while it is in the course of extirpation, to provide against its condemnatory consequences; yet, as the destruction of it is necessarily subservient to the ends of atonement, and is indispensable to the stability and to the consequent perfection of its work, it must be as much in a reflective way by its ministrations as it is directly by those of intercession, that its extermination is effected. In the mere act of acquittal, the immediate ends of expiation are gained; but as these are intended to make the removal of the curse definitive, and to prevent for ever the sinner's relapsation into condemnatory guilt, they must, along with a conferment of the present blessing of pardon, embrace a full provision for the perfect moral purification of the heart, and lasting confirmation of it in holiness.

The necessity of this is manifest from the nature of those principles upon which an atonement deals with the divine law and moral government. Its business is to make an ample amends to justice for the mischief which man's sins have perpetrated, and to buy him off from the law with a moral ransom which not only satisfies but aggrandizes its demands. The vicarious satisfaction which it renders must be fully equal to the guilt of its principals, and must make the law to be as much honored and mag-

* Jam. i. 15.

nified as though they were personally to endure the eternal inflictions of its penalty. Yet nothing of this description would be accomplished by an atonement which, without any efficient reference to the moral renovation of those for whom it is made, contents itself with a mere deliverance of them from punishment. An expiation like this would perform but half its work for the sinner; and, even on the assumption of its rendering that half permanent, would, were it accepted of, be an obvious disgrace to the law of God, and sow the seeds of derangement in his moral administration. Guiltlessness, in God's estimation, is of value only as it is the companion of moral purity. The execution of the penal sanction of his law upon transgressors is of use only because it vindicates his own holiness, and throws a safeguard round the innocence of sinless moral agents. Where, therefore, would be the worth of a vicarious system which, proposing to redeem men from the curse of the law, but all the while omitting an influential reference to their sanctification, neither manifests the indignation of the Deity at abstract pollution, nor recognizes, in a moral agent living in a state of freedom from punishment, the inseparable connexion which exists between spotlessness of soul and guiltlessness of life?

Now what is thus necessary from the nature of the case, is affirmed in the scriptures to be true in fact. 'This,' say they, speaking of Christ in respect to his incarnation and in reference consequently to his sacrificial character, 'This is he that came by water and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood,'*—a passage which, in consistency with the usual sense of the terms that are employed in it, can be understood in no way but as affirming the twofold bearing of the Saviour's expia-

* 1 John v. 6.

tion. It speaks of him exclusively in the past tense, confines its statements to the work which he performed on earth, and hence, with respect entirely to his sacrifice, declares that he came, or made himself manifest in our world, by the erection of both a justifying and sanctifying apparatus. He furnished the materials both of strict atonement, and of moral purification,—blood by the effusion of which guilt is removed, and water which washes away filth and uncleanness. The two literally and in a state of mixture rushed from his side when it was pierced with the soldier's spear upon the Cross. This event is obviously alluded to by John in his epistle; and it is noticed by him with such particularity and apparent emphasis in his gospel, as to be justly regarded, like some other occurrences of a similar description, in the double light of a mere fact, and of an historical emblem of abstract truth. Since, therefore, the two ingredients are, throughout the scriptures, spoken of as the symbols of legal and moral purification, the fact of their having conjunctly proceeded from Christ on the Cross, and the inspired assertion that they were the medium through which he revealed his substitutionary character, constitute sufficient evidence that his sacrificial death was as much concerned in a reflective way with moral renovation, as it was directly with the remission of sin.

Both in narrating the event to which we refer, and in his epistolary allusion to it, it is not improbable that John had his mind directed to the typification of our Lord's atonement in the Levitical cleansing of a leper. This, with the exception perhaps of the annual ministration, and, in some respects, of the holocaust, was the most significant type of the ritual. In a variety of ways, the disease of leprosy itself was strikingly emblematic of the nature and defilements of sin; and, on this account, it laid an ample foundation for a beautiful and extended

prefiguration of the work and the means by which iniquity is destroyed. It was, like sin, not only a legal disqualification from approaching the Deity and enjoying his favor, but was intrinsically an uncleanness, and required, in order to its removal, both an act of forgiveness and a process of cleansing. The blood, therefore, of the bird which was slain as the substitute of the person afflicted with it, was employed for the accomplishment of both ends. Part of it was, on the one hand, transferred to a living bird which, on receiving it upon its wing, was let loose and flew away into the field ; and part of it, on the other, was allowed, in the act of slaughter, to drop into a vessel of running water, and, in a state of mixture with this ingredient, was sprinkled seven times upon the leper. In the first respect, it effected the direct purpose of expiation in the remission of guilt ; and, in the second, it gained its reflective end in the removal of defilement. In the one case, the blood alone was sufficient to procure the release of the living bird, and to warrant, upon its flight, a declaration of pardon ; but, in the other, it required to be mingled with another liquid, before it could execute the posterior purpose of purification from uncleanness.

There is hence a precise exhibition made of both the immediateness of justification and the reflectiveness of moral renovation, as resulting from a piacular work. The flight of the living fowl, when its wing had been dipped in the blood of the slain bird, and when no additional means whatever had been employed, was the symbol of the former : the minglement of the blood, in the act of sacrificing, with running water, and the aspersion seven times,—a number which the Jews employed as descriptive of perfection,—of the compound fluid upon the leprous individual, were the emblem of the latter. In the purification, neither the mere water nor the mere blood could be effi-

cient. Moral renovation, upon the same principle, cannot be effected by water only, but by water and by blood. The Holy Spirit, whose influences are often in the scriptures compared to running or living or fountain water, is the immediate agent in accomplishing it; yet he never acts irrespectively of the work of atonement, nor begins his operations in the heart but in conjunction with the realization of its direct moral result in the act of justification. He is sent forth in answer to the petitions presented by Christ as an Intercessor; and, on account both of the inseparable connexion which exists between legal and moral life, and of the fact that the intercessory function and ministrations derive their existence and efficacy from the previous acceptance by God of the Saviour's sacrifice, he draws all the materials for the performance of his sanctifying work in a primary way from the atonement. Although, therefore, sacrificial blood does not of itself immediately accomplish moral purification; yet, as it requires to be mixed with the cleansing water, or, to throw away the figure, needs to be shed and accepted in order both to the erection of the intercessory function, and to the mission and operations of the Holy Spirit, and as, besides, the shedding of it is an act which necessarily veneers itself into those subsequent services of the Mediator through which all the spiritual blessings included in sanctification are conferred upon the justified, we view ourselves as fully warranted to infer, that reflectively it deals as much with the destruction of pollution, as it does immediately with the removal of condemnation.

Were so obvious a doctrine to require further vindication, there is matter enough for the purpose in several others of the types, and in many plain New Testament statements. A reference to these, however, is altogether unnecessary, and, instead of confirming, might tend only to invalidate a truth whose simplicity and manifest con-

sistency with the first principles of mediatorial salvation, are its own intrinsic evidence. It is by necessity interwoven with the very nature of a system which proposes to deliver fallen moral agents from depravity as well as guilt. Hence, nothing more is necessary for evincing it than simply to shew that it is taught in God's word, and recognized in his redeeming procedure with our race.

The truth, then, of a reflective influence in expiation is indubitable. The great things in which it consists, are the incorporation of a perfect example of moral excellence in the vicarious obedience of the sacrificial victim, the accomplishment of justification through the medium of faith in a body of truth which is hostile to impurity, the development and exhibition, in the substitute, of a surpassing love which constrains the sinner to a reciprocity of affection, and the erection upon the piacular function of a celestial advocacy by which all claims against the believer are answered, and the Divine Spirit sent forth as a spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and holiness.

The whole of these we conceive to have been ingredients developed in the different stages of our Lord's expiatory work,—things which, while they bear, in the point of view in which we represent them, upon moral renovation, were primarily concerned, in their direct reference to the injured law of God, with the extrication of man from punishment. What constituted Christ's example, when his fulfilment of the law is viewed in reflective reference to his people's sanctification, was precisely the same thing, when it is regarded as the imputed and legal ground of their acquittal from guilt, with his vicarious and sacrificial obedience. The faith through which expiation transfers its justifying results to the sinner, is identical with that by which it brings his mind into contact with the moral influence of the gospel. It was precisely the same mode of manifestation, by which the Redeemer at once cheerfully

devoted himself in a sacrificial way to the altar, and endeared himself to the attachment and the services of those for whom he suffered. The display which he made of his love, was, at the same moment, both the impulse by which he willingly sacrificed himself for his people, and the instrument with which he constrains them to live unto him and not unto themselves. The finishing act of atonement in which he presented his blood to God in the upper sanctuary, was simultaneously a propitiatory purification of heaven, and the effective origination of his intercessory function and ministrations. In every way, therefore, the reflective influence of expiation is, in respect to its ingredients, identical with its direct bearing upon justification.

With regard, however, to the way in which they are distinguished in their development, and to the manner in which moral renovation is both reflexly and immediately effected, we waive all discussion till we come to inquire into the moral results of intercession. We go on, in the meantime, to consider the remaining effects of atonement, the next of which is

III. *A Change in the Legal Qualities of Affliction and Death.*

These are integral parts of the curse due to sin. The first of them began to be inflicted upon Adam immediately after his fall, and continues to be allotted to all his posterity as a consequence of their apostacy. The second is repeatedly spoken of by Paul as a decided proof of the whole world being guilty before God, and of infants and idiots themselves, in whom moral accountability has not commenced, and who have never committed personal transgression, having sinned and died in our first repre-

sentative.* Unless, therefore, their nature be entirely altered, and unless security be given of their ultimate and eternal destruction, the endurance, on the part of any individual, of either of them, must afford evidence that he is yet in his sins, and is living under the inflictions of God's wrath. The visitations of them, consequently, upon the ungodly are every where spoken of in the divine word as judgments, and as the retribution of iniquity.

Distress, it is true, is sometimes, under the administration of Christ, employed subserviently to the word as an instrument of leading the impenitent to the faith of the gospel; but, in such cases, it is, to a certain extent, prospectively divested of its native properties, and, in virtue of the atonement, is converted into an handmaid of mercy. Even then, however, such a transmutation is but partial. When the subjects of it, while under its influence, are in the course of being brought to the knowledge of the truth, the saving operation is accomplished in a very limited way through the medium of it, and is chiefly and radically effected by the instrumentality of the word. It is not till they are actually justified that affliction ceases to be a judicial dispensation. Even when it is the means of sobering their mind into serious reflection, and of aiding the moral influence of the gospel in producing their repentance, it is all the while, in its general character, a punishment awarded to them for their sins. The exception, in the case of such, is therefore both partial and prospective; and, in the case of those whose trials shew themselves to have no connexion with a work of moral reformation, not even the shadow of this exception is to be found. To them, distresses are a cup of unmingled trembling and gall. They are the dark and cloudy preludes of an impending storm; and death is the bursting forth of the fury and hurricane of the tempest. Afflictions

* Rom. v. 12—17. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

are the electric flashes and the lowering sky which forerun the coming ruin; and dissolution is the explosion of the thunderbolt which hurls them into destruction. Troubles are the messengers of justice which follow them to the haunts of iniquity; and death is the executioner who drives them away in their wickedness. Every suffering which they undergo is a judicial calamity; and their final departure from the earth is that terrible infliction of wrath which blocks up every avenue of mercy, and chains them down in the blackness of darkness for ever.

Now since Christ, in his sacrificial capacity, vicariously underwent the whole penalty of his people's sins, and since this, in the imputation to them of his substitutionary obedience, is consequently averted from their heads, it should at first sight seem as if both afflictions and death would cease to be apportioned to them at the moment of their believing the gospel. These are a part of the punishment awarded to the guilt which has been borne away; and, the source being dried up, it is to be expected that they will themselves immediately disappear.

Such an expectation, in as far as the vindictive nature of them is concerned, is accordingly realized. For although, in their constituent ingredients, they remain the same, their legal character undergoes a complete alteration, and all their moral bearings are entirely changed. During the sinner's practical uninterestedness in the atonement, they formed a boiling and tempestuous river which deluged his possessions, tossed wreck and ruin upon his lands, and swept every thing valuable before it; but, from the time of his union with Christ and justification through his blood, they constitute a crystal stream whose fertilizing and fructifying waters spread life and vegetation around them, and convert the barren desert into a garden of the Lord.

The Saviour, in his expiation, fulfilled the prophecy,

'O death, I will be thy plagues;—O grave, I will be thy destruction.' In virtue of this, death is no longer death to a believer. As a part of the curse it is a monster with a sting. 'The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,'—a victory which, though its effects be not experimentally realized till dissolution, is gained at the moment when sin is forgiven, and the sinner is pronounced to be not under the law but under grace. The reality of death is then done away, and nothing of the King of Terrors is left but a shadow. With the Redeemer for his shepherd, and his sacrificial righteousness for his support, the darkest valley through which he has to pass is the valley of only death's shadow, and not the valley of death itself. There the shadow of dissolution will pass over him; but the judicial substance of it will be unknown. The shadow of a sword will not slay him; the shadow of a musket cannot shoot him; the shadow of an evil will not affect him; and the shadow of death cannot make him die. In order to his entering the heavenly sanctuary purified and prepared for him by his great High Priest, he requires to be transplanted from the earth. It is death which effects the transplantation. It constitutes his entrance to the courts of heaven, the avenue to glory, the gate through which he passes from the wilderness to the city, the vehicle which conveys him to his celestial home, the whirlwind which lifts him from the world to meet his Lord in the air. By a wonderful transmutation of its nature, it hence not only ceases to be a punishment, but acquires the properties of an invaluable blessing. Instead of being the instrument of launching the soul into everlasting tribulation, it is the means of its deliverance from a vile and cumbrous body, and of its investment with one incorruptible, powerful, glorious, and spiritual. It both ceases to be a part of

the curse itself, and places a believer on the ground to which no other parts of it can ever come. In the world to which it carries him, 'there shall be no more curse.'

In itself, therefore, death is destroyed by the atonement; and, in the light of mere dissolution, is a positive mercy of surpassing worth. The only thing which can bring the remotest suspicion upon its gracious character, is the connexion in which it stands with the afflictions which precede it. These, it is confessed, are, notwithstanding expiation, not joyous but grievous. They are painful and distressing; and, from the principle of suffering's companionship with sin, they may seem to betoken the presence of something punitive. Yet intrinsically evil as they are, they cease to be evils to a Christian.

On many grounds, and on account especially of his having to live for the well-being of others, for a practical exhibition to the impenitent of the nature and effects of the gospel, and for the more eminent display of the divine glory in the practical developement of the scheme of redemption, it is necessary that a believer's sanctification should be progressive, should, in order to its accomplishment, detain him for a season in the world, and should avail itself while he is here of the fittest means for the execution of its purposes. Now, next to the moral power of the word, and in a way of subserviency to its influence, what instrument can be more efficient than afflictions? In respect to those who are exercised by them, and in whose minds has been produced the spiritual discernment which forms a right estimate of moral things, they have the aptest tendency to work the peaceful fruits of righteousness. They teach them the vanity of earthly things, stimulate them to dependance upon God, shew them the value of the gospel's comforts, cut the cords which tie them to the world, and waft upwards their aspirations for deliverance from a body of sin and death. It is hence

that they are converted into the means of moral renovation, and that, while they are light and momentary in themselves, they work out a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

In one way, it is true, and in the light of chastisements or corrections, they are to be viewed as still existing in connexion with sin. Were there no pollution in believers, there would doubtless be a complete exemption from suffering. There would, however, be an equal exemption from every application of sanctifying agency. When the work of sanctification is finally brought to perfection, afflictions, as well as all the other means which are employed for effecting it, will be for ever done away.

Viewed, therefore, even in the light of chastisements, they are merciful and not judicial dispensations. To constitute punishments, they must originate in vindictive displeasure, and be accompanied with the expression of it; yet, in their being allotted to the people of God, they proceed entirely from paternal guardianship and affection. 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' If the faithful 'endure chastening, God dealeth with them as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if they were without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then would they be bastards and not sons.' Afflictions to them are among the fruits and evidences of their salvation; and, springing as they do from the very opposite feeling to that of wrath, they afford proof that, in the mind of God toward those who endure them, there are emotions of the utmost tenderness and complacency. They spring from that favor which begins to be displayed in justification; and they continue to be dispensed as the consequences and manifestations of paternal watchfulness, care, and love, till the subjects of them arrive at the manhood of their renovated being.

It hence appears that distresses, as measured out to the godly, so far from being things of deprecation, are converted by the atonement into mercies of consummate value. It extracts from them all the judicial gall with which they are mingled when poured out to the impenitent, and, in its place, infuses into them ingredients of delicious sweetness. It empties them out of the cup of trembling, and serves them up in the cup of blessing. The prisoner whom they were wont to scourge, it has removed from the cell to the palace, from the situation of a criminal to the enjoyment of the privileges, character, and honors of a son; and it sends them to him no longer as the ministers of justice to whip and punish him for his wickedness, but commissions them as the servants of peace to assist in arraying him with the princely robes of personal holiness.

In a radical and most momentous way, therefore, a change is effected upon afflictions and death by expiation. When this, consequently, is viewed in connexion with those effects of it which have been already specified, it will be seen, that, in order to its accomplishing a perfect removal of the curse and a full reparation of the evils of man's apostacy, it only requires farther to include among its moral results,

IV. *The Resurrection and Glorification of the Body.*

To speak of this as a result of atonement may, at first sight, be a little startling. Yet it needs but a moment's reflection to perceive, that the abstract principles of vicarious punishment, as well as the explicit declarations of the divine word, directly support the truth, that 'as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.' The body and the soul are, with equal essentiality, integral parts of the human constitution; and they

can be permanently separated by nothing but a judicial infliction. The dissolution of them is the essence of the temporal death which was threatened in the penal sanction of the law; and the previous diseasedness and mortalization of the one, and the subsequent execution upon the other of sore and agonizing torments, constitute the remaining departments of the curse. Now, as it would be inconsistent with a proper infliction of the penalty to suppose the body, after having been mortalized, to be restored by some redeeming influence to its paradisaic soundness, or to imagine the agonies of the soul to die away in the future world and, in the process of time, to be completely neutralized; so would it be equally incompatible with it to hold, that, when the two parts of the constitution have been disunited by direct penal interference, they will, as a consequence of the circumstances in which this interference has been made, be restored to their primeval condition, and brought back to the very state from which judgment had driven them.

What, in fact, is the resurrection, but just the counterpart of death? In the one, the connexion between soul and body is dissolved; and, in the other, it is formed anew. The one makes man a disembodied spirit; and the other lodges him afresh in a corporeal tabernacle. Death reduces the dust to its kindred element, and mingles it with the clods of the valley; and the resurrection gathers up its scattered particles, combines and remodels them in their pristine form, and breathes into them their former intellectual inhabitant. The one, therefore, is exactly the reverse of the other; and the former being a curse, the latter must necessarily be a blessing. To say, consequently, that without a mediation the dead would have been raised, is substantially to affirm that the moral government of God makes provision for neutralizing part of its own penal sanction, that justice not only deal

out a retribution of wrath but afterwards removes the vindictive tribulation which it has itself inflicted, that the seeds of redemption were sown in the constitution established with Adam, and that the penal code makes ample amends for the punishment which it awards, by the subsequent conferment of a counteracting and equivalent mercy.

Nor does it alter the case to allege, that, though the reanimation of the body be in itself a blessing, it is nevertheless an evil to the wicked. This undoubtedly is true; yet the truth is not connected with the penal sanction of the law, but with the penal sanction of Christianity. If the resurrection be intrinsically good,—and this all parties admit,—it can neither have its origin in a judicial dispensation, nor can it be converted into a mischief, but by a perversion of the system in the right use of which it retains its properties of a blessing. Now, as it is by possessing the faith of the gospel, that it is enjoyed in its native goodness; it must be purely in consequence of unbelief, that it is clothed in characters of accursedness. The faith of Christ preserves its excellence; and the rejection of Christianity transforms it into an evil. It holds the same place with the mediatorial dispensation, that the complex and peculiar structure of the body did with the constitution established with Adam. The latter was intrinsically a blessing, and was auxiliary to man's enjoyments while he continued in obedience; but it was transmuted into a positive calamity, and was made subservient to the execution of the curse by his apostacy. The resurrection, in the same way, is good if the gospel be believed; but it is changed into a sore and punitive evil if Christianity be rejected. It is entirely, therefore, with the Christian economy that it has to do; and with the penal sanction of the law, or with the paradisaic dispensation as a whole, it can have no concern.

It is, accordingly, to Christ that the resurrection is uniformly ascribed. It and mortality are respectively affirmed of him and of Adam, are placed over against each other in a contrasted parallel, and are represented as originating in precisely opposite sources. 'For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*'

The mortalization and the reanimation of the body are thus contrasted both in their own intrinsic nature, and in the agencies by which they are originated. They are affirmed to be incompatible both in their origin and in their native properties; and they are shewn to have an equal existence in the history of man on account entirely of his connexion with the two opposite constitutions which give them birth. The existence of the one is declared to be a consequence of the dispensation under which guilt was publicly contracted and was representatively entailed upon our race; and the overthrow and supplantation of it by the other, is averred to be a result of the constitution in which the mischiefs of man's apostacy are repaired in a work of redemption. Adam, acting in the name of all his posterity, committed sin, subjected himself to the curse, brought himself under the sentence 'dust thou art,

* 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 45—49.

and unto dust thou shalt return,' and hence became of the earth, earthy; and Christ, acting like him as a public head, and undergoing the effects of his transgression, brought in an everlasting righteousness, endured the penalty of temporal death, rose with a body freed from the legal dominion of sin, possesses it in the celestial bloom and beauty of incorruption, and, in respect to it, is not from the earth where every thing blights and perishes by the curse, but is 'the Lord from heaven.' Death passes upon all men, and reigns over even those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, because by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin:* those who sleep in Jesus are raised and have their vile bodies changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body,† because he destroyed death and him that had the power of death,‡ became the first fruits of the victory over the grave, and is the resurrection and the life.§ In our subjection to death and putrefaction, we bear the image of the earthly Adam: in our rising to immortality and being clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, we shall bear the image of the heavenly. Death is the wages of sin: the glorification of the body is the work and gift of God. The tabernacle which the souls of the faithful occupy here, is earthly and doomed to dissolution: the house that they shall inhabit hereafter, is a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.|| When they pass from the one to the other, mortality, the consequence of guilt, is swallowed up of life; and the salvation will be completed which is begun by God's working them for this self-same thing, and by his giving to them the earnest of the Spirit.¶ Corruption is a bondage from which they will

* Rom. v. 12—14. † Phil. iii. 21. ‡ Heb. ii. 14. § John xi. 25. || 2 Cor. v. 1. ¶ 2 Cor. v. 4, 5.

then be freed; and it is a burden beneath the weight of which they all groan and travail together in pain even until now. To the ultimate destruction of it they look forward with a hope which rests on the work of Christ, to which they were begotten by his resurrection from the dead, and which regards the coming change as the adoption or redemption of their bodies, and the manifestation and glorious liberty of the children of God.*

All the passages, then, to which we refer, as well as others of a parallel nature which might be quoted, make it plain, we apprehend, that the resurrection is a direct consequence of the Redeemer's mediation, and that, but for this, the bodies of men would never have been raised from the shame of putrefaction, and the deathful effects of transgression. The change which will be accomplished on the corporeal part of our nature is substantially a neutralization of all the departments of the curse which affect it. While, therefore, it is to be viewed, in its general character of a blessing, as accruing from the work of Christ as a whole; it is, in this particular view of it, to be regarded as a moral result immediately of the piacular function. Whatever is connected with guilt as its punishment, it is directly the province of expiation to remove. The deliverance, consequently, of the body from corruption, as well as the rescue of the soul from the agonies of wrath, must be included among its specific and official effects. 'Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them. But God will redeem my soul from the grave; for he shall receive me.† 'For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not

* Rom. viii. 18—23.

† Ps. xlix. 14, 15.

another, though my reins be consumed within me.'* 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.'†

The hope of Job was founded on the work of Christ as his Redeemer, and sprang from his firm belief that this work would be performed by him in the latter day, or in the commencement of the new economy, when he should stand upon the earth. He thus connected the resurrection of the body with what should be done by our Lord in the world. Christ, in the same way, identifies the legal destruction of death, with the redemption from the power of the grave, of those who through fear of it were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to accomplish this, he required to be a partaker of flesh and blood;‡ and it was in our world, in his incarnate state, and in his sacrificial capacity, that he effected it. In consequence of his bearing sin by imputation and of his consequent subjection to the infliction of its penalty, he came under the dominion of mortality; but, in virtue of his having fully atoned for it in his dissolution, his flesh rested in hope, his soul was not left in the place of the dead, and he was not suffered to see corruption.§ God raised him again from the grave, the pains of death being loosed, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. In respect, therefore to his atonement, he became the first fruits of them that slept, and was both delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. 'He died and rose and revived' in his sacrificial character; and, after the transpiration of both his crucifixion and his resurrection, and after, in addition to them, he had ascended to heaven,

* Job xix. 25—27.

† Hos. xiii. 14.

‡ Heb. ii. 14.

§ Ps. xvi. 9, 10.

and not till then, did he commence to discharge his intercessory function. It was in regard entirely to what took place before his intercession began, that he was the plagues of death and the destruction of the grave. The power of the one, as well as the sting of the other, is sin. It was purely in his expiation that this was removed. The triumph, consequently, which is obtained by his people over all the ingredients and effects of mortality, is to be regarded as a result entirely of his piacular work.

Viewing, as we are thus warranted to do, the glorification of the body, as a moral result of expiation, it might seem as if, in consistency with the doctrine, the important change should take place upon believers simultaneously with their being justified,—that then, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, their bodies should be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. Against such a disposition of things, however, the same reasons operate as those which make it expedient to continue the justified in subjection for a season to afflictive dispensations. Although the blessing is one of which they are put in legal possession at the moment of their believing the gospel; yet there is carried forward a high process of subserviency to the promotion of their moral well-being by delaying its actual conferment till the arrival of the general judgment. 'They are made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected them in hope.* Were they in the actual enjoyment of the blessing, they would not only be impervious to the moralizing influence of affliction, but would also be stripped of all the invaluable advantages of hope. 'For that which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?† Yet such is the surpassing worth of this principle as an instrument of moral renovation, that, in respect to this as a fruit

* Rom. viii. 20. † Rom. viii. 24.

of it, 'we are saved by hope.' 'And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.'* Sanctification is indispensable to the entrance of heaven and the participation of its felicities. Whatever acts as an efficient means of effecting or increasing it, is of fundamental importance in accomplishing the reflective designs of the very work from which the resurrection results. In delaying, therefore, the bestowment of a glorified body till a future state, expiation, while it imparts a legal title to the boon contemporaneously with the sinner's justification, does nothing to militate against its own effectiveness, and only places its various results in such an attitude of mutual connexion and relationship, as to constitute a complete and harmonious salvation.

Nor is there any thing in the fact, that the resurrection is common to the whole of our race, which can be urged as a solid argument against its originating in the piacular function. In itself, as we have repeatedly said, it is a blessing, and manifestly springs from the Saviour's mediation; and if it is not substantially confined to the saved, but is extended to mankind universally, there is no greater difficulty in accounting for this apparent phenomenon, than there is in explaining a variety of other consequences of the constitution established with Christ, which, as well as this, expatiate upon men at large. No one will pretend that to those passed by in the divine purpose of election, nothing good accrues from the Redeemer's work. In order both to shew his wrath and make his power known upon the impenitent, and to make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, God endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.† For the sake of his own people, he frequently withholds from the wicked the inflictions of his

* I John iii. 3.

† Rom. ix. 22, 23.

anger, gives them all the advantages of an outward dispensation of the gospel, and surrounds them with the common mercies of providence,—‘making his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sending his rain on the just and on the unjust.’* The very existence of a mediatorship, and the consequent erection of an apparatus for dispensing its favors among men of every country, language, and situation, are things which reflect powerfully upon the well-being of even the impenitent; and, while they leave them still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, they yet recognize them as tares growing amongst the wheat, and, lest the latter should suffer with them in any calamity with which they might be visited, preserve them for a season amidst the flourish of vegetation and the salutary influence of shower and sunshine, and secure them against a bereavement of such blessings till both are gathered in at the end of the world.† In a limited way, even heathens themselves are gainers by the revelation of God’s will, the subjection of the world to an economy of mercy, and the preservation of it for effecting the designs of salvation. Yet, in a vastly higher sense, are those gainers by them, who, though they continue in unbelief, enjoy all the restraining influence upon rapine and profligacy of a gospel dispensation, and partake of all the political, social, and commercial well-being which accrues from the conscientious rectitude and the sterling worth of the faithful. Many a Potiphar prospers in the world from his connexion with a Joseph. And rejected though it be by multitudes who hear it, who will venture to doubt that the very proclamation of pardon through the Cross, is itself an invaluable mercy? Yet this blessing, great as it is and worth worlds to those who believingly receive it, is conferred upon millions who neglect the

* Matt. v. 45.

† Matt. xiii. 24—43.

great salvation which it promises. A perfect pardon is freely offered to men without distinction of character or situation. What would not the fallen angels give to have their ears regaled with such an animating and joyful sound !

This may shew us that, notwithstanding the restriction of eternal life to those who are ordained to it, there are many correlative and positive blessings springing from the work of Christ, in which the unrenewed participate. Nor, from the nature of the atonement, and from the manner in which its results are transferred to the believing, could it well be otherwise ? The distinction which has been made between the efficiency and the sufficiency of the Saviour's blood, is to be constantly borne in mind. It is to be viewed, not merely as a doctrine of theological science, but as a truth which practically bears upon the divine administration,—as a principle which pervades and modifies the Christian economy, and stamps a character upon both the institutions which it upholds, and the peculiar blessings which it confers. While it is in respect to its efficiency that the atonement has to do with salvation, its sufficiency, and the universal call of the gospel which is founded on it, give rise to the accompanying good which is apportioned to the impenitent, and operate meanwhile in a way of necessary subserviency to the execution of its saving efficiency upon those who believe. The elect are to be gathered from the four winds of heaven, are scattered among all nations and countries, and shall be found as one of a city and two of a family. Hence, in order to the gospel presenting itself to their faith, originates the necessity for its universal call,—that call which connects itself not with the efficiency but with the sufficiency of expiation, and in the means for conveying which are embedded all the subordinate consequences of

a mediation which assume the form and possess the nature of present benefits to the unrenewed.

It is to be remarked, however, that while these are actually blessings in themselves, and that while they are enjoyed as such by the unbelieving in the world, they are ultimately converted into the source of a sorer tribulation to those who, in spite of possessing them, 'receive the grace of God in vain.' This is the condemnation of such, that light comes into the world, and that they love the darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil.* To them, the preaching of the Cross, sweet savor though it be in itself, and precious to those who are saved by it, will be 'the savor of death unto death.'† It will hence be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them.‡

Now the case is precisely the same with the resurrection. All, in consequence of the unbounded sufficiency of the atonement from which it flows, will be partakers of it; but, in virtue of its limited efficiency, those only who have believed the gospel will participate in its blessedness. In itself, as it directly results from the work of Christ, it is a neutralization of part of the curse; but, in the perverted use which those have made of Christianity who have despised its overtures of mercy, it is converted, along with the dispensation of the gospel and its many subordinate benefits, into a punishment for the sins of unbelief and impenitency.

A twofold condemnation rests upon the head of every unbeliever. He is guilty, both as a breaker of the law, and as a despiser of mercy. There hence requires to be executed upon him a twofold judicial retribution,—both the original curse, and the threatening appended to the rejection of Christianity. Now, as the law took the very

* John iii. 19.

† 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

‡ Matt. x. 15.

things which it employed in ministering to man's happiness while he remained in innocence,—the peculiarity of his constitution, his corporeal structure, his mental powers, and the mutual action and re-action of body and mind,—and turned them into the instruments of its vengeance upon him for his apostacy ; so does the gospel avail itself of the proclamation of pardon, the reanimation of the body, and the re-uniting of it with the soul, for advancing, on the one hand, the well-being of those who believe its doctrines, and for inflicting, on the other, a just punishment upon those who throw them away. The recollection of all the calls of mercy which they neglected and scouted in the world, the sore remorse and self-reproach which will be created by the consciousness of having trifled away the day of salvation, the fruitless and agonizing wish to be carried back for but an hour to the house of God, the tremendous despair of ever hearing another whisper of clemency or compassion through the atonement,—these, as well as the presence of that body which they called in vain upon the hills and mountains to cover and bury afresh in the grave, will constitute, in the eternal experience of the lost, a torment of righteous recompense for having ‘made God a liar’ by the disbelief of his evangelical record, and will make it manifest that vengeance is taken on them, not only for ‘knowing not God,’ but also for ‘obeying not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.’*

To the unbelieving, the resurrection will, in this way, be transmuted into a punishment, additional to the original penalty of the law, for the double guilt of rebellion and unbelief. ‘They will arise to shame and everlasting contempt,’ and ‘all their faces will gather blackness.’ There will be no participation on their part of the glorifi-

* 2 Thess. i. 8.

cation of body which will attend the resurrection of the just; nor will they receive back the corporeal part of their nature with any feelings but those of dismay, at seeing another source of pain opened up to them through eternity. The restoration of what was once a part of themselves, will yield them nothing but the tormenting reflection, that what would else have been to them an invaluable blessing, is transformed into a curse by their infatuated heedlessness to the overtures of salvation. To them, the resurrection will not come in its native loveliness as a redeeming neutralization of the penalty of sin; but it will come in the character of a boon which their own madness has perverted into a means of aggrandizing the terror and desolation of vindictive wrath.

To the justified, however, it will be otherwise. They will 'attain to the resurrection of the dead' as it flows natively from the atonement. To them, it will be an event in which the body is only raised that it may be glorified. In this lies the grand distinction, in respect to it, between them and the wicked. The resurrection, viewed as it is in itself, and as it remains unperverted by the influence of unbelief, is strictly synonymous with the body's glorification. It is only when stripped by impenitency of its characters of a blessing, that it leaves the clay tabernacle in a state of degradation. The body with which, as a result of expiation, it is destined to invest the soul, is incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. It is purely in consequence of their having exposed themselves to the tribulation of a second curse, that it comes, in the case of the ungodly, to be changed into one of shame and contempt. 'But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial another. There is one glory of the sun, and another

glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.* Hence are 'the hope' and 'the resurrection' of the dead employed as interchangeable phraseology.† And if, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall, some of them, come forth to the resurrection of life, there will be those who shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation, it is only because they have done evil in setting at nought the Saviour's messiahship, and because, as the retribution of their unbelief, that body which they receive in connexion with a system of mercy they despised, is consigned over to condemnation.‡

This may serve to explain the various passages in which, to a superficial reader, the resurrection appears to be spoken of in a peculiar sense. 'Yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.'§ Why, it has been asked, does Paul connect, in this way, the attainment of the resurrection with the saving knowledge of Christ? Since all men are to be raised, would he not have attained to it whether he knew the Saviour or not? True; but, without the knowledge of him, he would not have attained to it in its native and intrinsic characters. He contemplates it as a naked and unperverted result of expiation, identifies it with the aggran-

* 1 Cor. xv. 35, 40—44. † Acts xxiii. 6. ‡ John v. 17—31.

§ Phil. iii. 8, 10; 11.

dizement and eternal redemption of the body, and, regarding any thing else as not the resurrection itself, but the resurrection transformed by the guilt of unbelief into a judgment, affirms that it is attainable, like justification and the other results of the atonement, only in a state of legal union with the Redeemer. 'This is the first resurrection,'—the resurrection in its primeval and unadulterated form. 'Blessed and holy are they that have part in it; on such, the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ.* This is that better resurrection, for the sake of which, persecuted believers have submitted to torture, not accepting deliverance.† In it, a body will be received in which there shall be no more pain or sickness or death, the last stone will be added to the temple of the Lord, the finishing result of expiation realized, and the entire work of personal redemption eternally completed. The blessing to be then enjoyed, will put the faithful in possession of the whole salvation which they obtained but partially on earth; and, assuming their previous enjoyment of all the other consequences of a mediation, it will pronounce them to be perfectly and for ever saved. The raised and glorified body will be joined to a soul as thoroughly freed from the corruption of sin, as it is itself from the corruption of mortality. Their re-union will evince, that to neither of them apart, nor to both of them conjoined, will there be any more curse. Believers, in possession of them, will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and shall be ever with the Lord.‡

It is hence that the apostles regarded 'the preaching through Jesus of the resurrection from the dead,'§ as strictly synonymous with declaring the whole testimony of God respecting the way of salvation. They are only those

* Rev. xx. 5, 6. † Heb. xi. 35. ‡ 1 Thess. iv. 17. § Acts iv. 2.

who are alive unto God by faith in the atonement, and who, in being constituted the children of God, become the children of the resurrection, who shall 'be counted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection of the dead;*' and they are believers alone, who have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus, and who are the subjects of the indwelling and operations of the Holy Ghost, to whom there will be made a literal fulfilment of the promise,—'He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.'† Identifying, therefore, the resurrection of the body with its glorification, regarding this as the primary and genuine nature of the event, esteeming it as the concluding result of expiation inclusive by posteriority of every other, and viewing the reanimation of the impenitent as a visitation of wrath for their gospel guilt; the apostles went every where 'preaching Jesus and the resurrection,'‡ confident that, in teaching the former subject, they made fully known the abstract work of the Redeemer, and that, in expatiating on the latter, they sufficiently explained the whole of its moral results. It is the last of those glorious consequences which flow from the Saviour's previous sacrifice. If men be counted worthy to receive it, they have already 'the righteousness which is of God by faith.' 'All things are theirs, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'§ 'If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.'|| 'Behold, I shew you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an

* Luke xx. 35—38. † Rom. viii. 11. ‡ Acts xvii. 18.

§ 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. || 1 Thess. iv. 14.

eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.*

* 1 Cor. xv. 51—54.

CHAP. IV.

INTERCESSION.

The business of Christ's priesthood has been shewn to consist of the two works of atonement and intercession. The former is a process of performance in which the necessary materials of a plea are furnished; and the latter is the proper use and arrangement of them in a course of overt pleading. We are hence instructed in the order of their succession, and in their relative bearing and connexion. The one constitutes the foundation on which the other is erected, and must necessarily precede it in the order of its accomplishment. Without a previous expiation, the requisite ingredients of a plea are not to be found, and there can be no engagement in the duties of intercession.

It thus appears that a distinction must be made between the prayers which the Redeemer offered up on earth, and the pleadings which he conducts in heaven since his ascension. The latter,—with the exception of the supplications recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel, are those alone, which, in the strict sense of the phraseology, constitute his intercession. The former, notwithstanding the objects of them having been so frequently the same as those of the other, are to be viewed

as having been presented by him, not in his intercessory, but in his sacrificial capacity.

It is to be remembered that, in the state of substitution in which he remained during the whole period of making expiation, it became him to fulfil all righteousness, and that his obedience to all the precepts of the law, and his living exemplification of every feature of piety of heart and uprightness of life, were things as indispensable to the piacularity of his sacrifice, as his passive endurance of the pains embodied in a positive infliction of the curse. He could not, without them, have become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; nor could he have succeeded in giving efficiency to his atonement, either in its magnifying the law and making it honorable, or in its reflective influence upon the moral and inherent renovation of transgressors. And whether we look at the connexion of his personal holiness with the aggrandizement of God's moral government, or at its involving the necessary display of a perfect pattern of moral goodness to the ransomed, it is manifest that prayer was as requisite as any other of its ingredients.

Nor are we to suppose that our Lord's own sinlessness made the duty incompatible with his situation. It is not, we are to recollect, in a properly personal point of view, but in one altogether vicarious,—in one which assumes his having acted in no respect for himself, but as having performed every part of his work either mediately or directly on behalf of man, as having done and suffered, not things which were personally incumbent on him, but things which ought to have been performed and undergone by his people,—that we are to regard him, when we contemplate his procedure in our world. Now, it will not be pretended that prayer, and especially when it is inclusive of supplication for the well-being of others, and when it necessarily connects itself with a scriptural profes-

sion of either love to the good, or benevolence to the wicked, is an indifferent or unmomentous article of moral rectitude among men. In that state of things in which mankind are placed in reference to the law that they are under, prayer, in fact, or the disposition of mind which leads to it, and of which it is the expression, is the very essence of piety. It is, in its most enlarged sense, the substance of the homage or worship which we owe to God. It is that in which we acknowledge his authority and government as the ruler of the universe, render a becoming adoration of his infinite perfections, ascribe to him the praise and the glory of his procedure, express our gratitude for the numberless mercies with which we are encompassed, make request for the welfare of our fellow-men, and offer up desires for a bestowment of requisite blessings on ourselves. This is prayer in the wide and scriptural acceptation of the term. It forms a fundamental part of every individual's moral rectitude, virtually includes an obedience to every commandment in the first table of the decalogue, and inseparably interweaves itself with a right discharge of all the personal and relative duties of life. It was plainly, therefore, an indispensable and a bulky ingredient in Christ's fulfilment of the righteousness of the law, and manifestly differed in its essential nature from that forensic pleading which he carries on since his exaltation. This very duty, consequently, in the precise light in which we have represented it, formed the material of all those supplications and prayers which were offered up by him in the days of his flesh.

Evidence of this, at once abundant and decisive, might be adduced from those psalms in which David spake of him,—psalms which, notwithstanding many of them having been quoted by the New Testament writers and applied by them in the most pointed and exclusive way to the Redeemer, the great majority of commentators have

interpreted, in all the length and breadth of their phraseology, as the individual and personal utterances of the penmen who wrote them,—psalms which have been forced to speak no higher language than that of the mere experiences of David and Asaph and Moses, which have been affirmed to contain nothing more than prayers and thanksgivings which were dictated by the different events of their history, and which are held to have originated entirely in the neediness or prosperity, the exposure to temptation, danger, or the malice of the wicked, which their shifting circumstances created,—but psalms, nevertheless, which can be shewn, both from their intrinsic character, and from the testimony of inspired men, to have had a direct and unlimited application to the Saviour. This, we grant, cannot be affirmed of them all; but it can still be said of the great majority. Numbers of them,—at least one-fourth,—are quoted by our Lord himself and his apostles, and are treated by them as illustrations throughout of his sacrificial character, sufferings, and work; and these so closely resemble the most of the others in their structure, spirit, sentiments, and references, as to leave no doubt upon the mind, that, with the exception of a very few, all the compositions of the psalmody are either the prophetic and prospective utterances of Christ, or visions with which the writers of them were favored of his peculiar performances on earth.

Now, while they are so manifestly the materials of prayer in all its departments of adoration, thanksgiving, supplication, humiliation, and petition, as to have been so frequently mistaken for the immediate effusions of pious men's hearts; it must be plain that, having prophetically proceeded from the lips of our Lord, they can be nothing else than the ingredients and expressions of that perfect piety, which he possessed and exemplified in his vicarious acting in our world. The petitions which they embody,

are so widely different, in many of their particulars, from his intercessions in heaven, and they so closely, in almost every respect, agree with the spirit and the matter of a piety which is embedded in an obedience to law, as to make the inference unavoidable, that they were presented by him in a totally different character from that of a forensic intercessor. They obviously, therefore, were just those supplications and prayers which, in the days of his flesh, he offered up with strong crying and tears to him who was able to save him from death.

Let us instance this in the language of the fortieth psalm, one which, whatever objections may be urged against a similar understanding of some others, no person who remembers that it is four times quoted and applied to Christ in the New Testament,* will think of interpreting with any other primary reference. In it, not only do we find statements of the feelings which arose from his exposure to manifold sufferings, but we have likewise a summary of all the other psalms of prayer and thanksgiving to which we have referred. 'I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.' Is not this a most explicit and intelligible proof that he prayed in our world for things which cannot, from the very nature of them, have a place in his intercedings for his people in heaven? He prayed for deliverance from the tremendous evils which surrounded him; he besought a rescue from the waters which had gone into his soul, and from the deep mire in which he could find no standing; he did so, not assuredly as an intercessor for his ransomed, but purely as a sufferer whose piety led him to seek relief exclusively from God;

* Heb. x. 5, and ii. 12. Matt. ix. 13, and xii. 7.

and, in regard to those dispositions and actions which become the upright in a season of adversity, he was performing, in his direct obedience to the law, and exemplifying, for the imitation of his followers, the duties of cleaving closely to the Deity, and of confidentially depending upon his guardianship and support. And what else than something similar to this can be said respecting the expressions of gratitude and rejoicing which immediately follow? 'He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou has done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.' Expressions like these could never occur in conducting a properly official advocacy; and as they utter gratitude for a reason intimately connected with the sufferings to which reference had been made, and affirm the Saviour's thankfulness for the deliverance from trouble which was accomplished at the termination of his passion, they must obviously have proceeded from that feeling of a holy heart toward God, which ought to spring up at the reception of his mercies, and the manifestations of his love.

Thus far, therefore, the prayer of the psalm is visibly inconsistent with both the spirit and the matter of proper intercession. Nor when, at the close of it, sentences are introduced which are of a supplicatory description, and which have the well-being of others for their object, does any thing exist which can warrant our divesting them of the character which belongs to the rest of the address. 'Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified. But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Thou art my help, and my deliverer;

make no tarrying, O my God.' Just as the request for the good of others had been preceded and introduced by personal praises and petitions, so, as soon as it is uttered, it merges itself, in the same way, into a concluding aspiration which, like those interwoven with the whole prayer, is the breathing of desires respecting the Redeemer's individual situation. Even, consequently, when matter which may appear intercessory is inserted, the connexion in which it occurs clearly demonstrates its disconnectedness with forensic advocacy, and shews it to be the species of procedure enjoined in the commandment of the law to 'make prayers and supplications for all men.' This is a part of duty which is inseparable from genuine obedience; and it was the performance of it which occupied the Saviour when he offered up the prayer before us, and all the kindred supplications of the psalmody.

It is apparent, then, that when we examine this psalm as a specimen of them,—and for doing this we have the high warrant of inspired authority,—the prayers which Christ presented to his Father on earth, appear to have been offered up by him purely in his obediential character. Now, just as there is a sameness between those of them which were written at length by David and others in the spirit of prophecy, and those of his people who, in copying his example, and in having in them the same mind which was also in him, approach the throne of grace on behalf of others and themselves; so, in examining the few notices of them which are given in his New Testament history, and in marking the particular circumstances in which they originated, we discover the similarity to be not only corroborated, but rendered vastly more minute and conspicuous.

At the moment when his sanguinary murderers were nailing him to the Cross, he said in regard to them, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they

do.* In a similar situation, one of his followers kneeled down amidst the showers of stones with which his persecutors were putting him to death, and 'cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.† Now, to say nothing of the identity of the spirit cherished by the two suppliants, and of the striking coincidence in the very words which they employed, [it is plain that the prayer of our Lord was never answered in all the extent of the petition which it made,—a fact which is quite incompatible with the idea of its having been intercessory. His official pleading is obviously all of it prevalent. To suppose it otherwise, is virtually to deny both the perfection and the efficiency of his mediatorship. The want of success must originate either in the unreasonable impropriety of the request, or in the absence of a plea sufficiently weighty to enforce it,—suppositions either of which fatally derogates from the infinite worth and the finished completeness of his ministrations. A prayer, therefore, which was not answered in all its latitude, and the prayer consequently which he presented on behalf of his crucifiers, many of whom, the inspired narrative leads us to believe, never were forgiven, and some of whom lived to realize the punishment of their crime in the awful destruction of Jerusalem, could occupy no place in his regular advocacy.

The same thing must be said respecting the supplication which he repeatedly made for himself in Gethsemane: 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.‡ This, although it was not in a certain sense unavailing, was yet uttered fully in the spirit of many of the psalms which speak of him, and is in perfect unison with those desires for deliverance, accompanied and modified by a strong

* Luke xxiii. 34. † Acts vii. 60. ‡ Matt. xxvi. 39.

solicitude for acquiescence in the will of God, which it becomes his followers to carry to the throne of grace in a time of trouble. It did not,—unless we except the latter part of it which may be regarded as one of the repeated expressions of his purpose of sacrificial devotement,—proceed from him as directly indicative of his state of mind toward his people ; but was drawn from him as a consequence of the tremendous and agonizing excruciations which he then endured, and as the material of a pattern for the imitation of his followers in circumstances of depressing affliction. He taught them by it, that duty requires the minglement of submission with the heaviest calamities which can befall us, that distress ought always to heighten the tone of our devotion, to increase the firmness of our dependance upon God, and to carry us with greater fervor and devotedness to his mercy-seat, and that we are to look for comfort under its continuance and for the power by which it will be removed, to no other quarter than divine interference. While, therefore, it furnished lessons of such fundamental importance, it constituted a part both of that obedience which, in his state of humiliation and substitution, he owed to the law, and of that perfect example of all moral goodness which it behoved him, in his sacrificial character and acting, to exhibit.

Such is the way, then, in which these two prayers are to be viewed ; and, in essentially the same point of light, we are to regard all the others, with one exception, which he presented to God in our world. The exception to which we refer, is, as we have already hinted, that which is preserved in the seventeenth Chapter of the Gospel by John.

Now just as there are, we conceive, sufficient grounds for referring all the rest exclusively to his obediential or sacrificial character, so there are reasons which induce us

to believe, that this was not only itself of an intercessory nature, but that, in many parts of it, it is to be viewed as an exemplar of the pleading which he perpetually carries on in heaven. In some respects, indeed, it is of a mixed character, and, on the supposition of its being strictly repeated in the heavenly places, may be nearly as inappropriate as the others which he offered up on earth; yet, although it contains one or two statements which sprang immediately from the circumstances in which he was then placed, which assume his sacrifice as not having yet been completely made, and which must therefore be viewed as so many subtractions from the general amount of its purely intercessory materials, it is nevertheless plainly prospective as a whole, regards, by anticipation, the work of atonement as having actually arrived at its completion, and employs it as the substance of a plea on behalf of those for whom it was performed.

When he spoke this prayer, the Saviour had newly arisen from the celebration of the ordinance which he had appointed to be thenceforward observed in commemoration of his death. In the institution of it, he had spoken of his body as already broken and of his blood as already shed; and he had anticipatively viewed the new covenant as actually ratified by his crucifixion. He, therefore, merely extended the same principle, when, immediately after the observance of the supper, he prayed for his disciples on the assumption that the work of their redemption had all of it been literally ended. The fullest evidence exists that this assumption was made in regard to the former; nor is there less explicit proof that it was also made in reference to the latter. In the one he declared, '*this is my body which is broken for you;*' and in the other, he affirmed, '*I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*'

Now, as it is plain that all the supplications which fol-

low are made to rest and turn upon this introductory declaration, and as, without it, we cannot suppose that he would have proceeded to pray for his people's growth in grace and ultimate glorification; it must be obvious that the petitions which he addressed throughout the prayer to his Father, hung with as much necessity upon the actual completion of his atonement, as the ratification of the covenant did upon the fact of his blood having been really shed. When he drank wine with his disciples, the covenant had not been literally sealed, nor had his blood ceased to circulate in his veins; yet he prospectively saw his death to be as certain as if it had already transpired, viewed by anticipation the promises as all truly confirmed by his crucifixion, regarded the way into the Holiest as actually made manifest, and hence began to expatiate upon the blessings of holiness and glory which would flow from this completed work to his ransomed. When, in the same way, he subsequently lifted up his eyes to heaven and pleaded with his Father for his followers, the piacular process by which the plea and the prevalency of his intercession are provided for, had not been fully accomplished; yet, looking forward to its termination, and foreseeing that it would as assuredly be perfected as if it had been then completed, he affirmed it to be finished, and proceeded, on the idea of its having been really terminated, both to survey the moral grandeur of his own exaltation, and to express his will that those whom the Father had given him should be with him where he was that they might behold his glory. The whole prayer, therefore, was clearly uttered by anticipation; and, with the exception of the few detached clauses to which we have referred, it obviously, like the institution of the eucharist, viewed his crucifixion as a past and finished event. When bread is eaten and wine drunk by his disciples in remembrance of him, there is a commemoration

of his death as an occurrence literally past; and when, upon the same principle, the petitions in the Seventeenth of John were presented by him to God, he had immediate respect in them to the actual presentation and acceptance of his sacrifice in heaven. Take away the truth of his crucifixion, and the Christian sacrament is a mere mockery: remove the glory of his sacrificial oblation, and his intercession no longer exists. On the same ground, consequently, that we maintain the subserviency of the one to his death, we affirm the posteriority of the other to the completion of his atonement.

A disclosure is thus made, both of the reasons for which we believe Christ's prayer after the last supper to have been intercessory, and of the proper line of demarcation which is to be drawn between it in common with his continual intercession, and those supplications which were offered up by him in his sacrificial capacity. The latter formed part of his obedience, embraced all the wide range of objects included in the general duties of prayer, and necessarily regarded the work of expiation as merely in the course of accomplishment; but the former views his obedience as completed, takes up the materials furnished by his perfected atonement and employs them in a process of overt advocacy, respects Christ as no longer in a state of humiliation but as invested with all the honors and prerogatives of exalted saviourship, and confines itself in the putting forth of its influence entirely to those of our race for whom his sacrifice was made. His intercession, therefore,—with the exception of the prayer to which we have been adverting, and which we have just seen was offered up by anticipation,—literally commenced only when the last act of his expiatory work was performed. Since in this point, however, lies a knowledge of the general nature of the function, it is

necessary to give it something more than a mere passing attention.

In the ministrations of the Jewish High Priest on the day of annual atonement, he was enjoined, in addition to the presentation and aspersion of the sacrificial blood, to 'take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, to fill his hands with sweet incense beaten small, to bring it within the vail, and to put the incense upon the fire before the Lord that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat that was upon the testimony.* While he was engaged in this service, all the people stood without and prayed † and when he had finished it, and had retired from the sanctuary, he pronounced upon them blessings which he had received in virtue of it, and which he had been commissioned to carry to the congregation. The burning of the incense was always subsequent in order to the sprinkling of the blood, and could not with impunity have taken place without the antecedency of the prescribed sacrifice. When the smoke of it went up from the censer to the Shechinah, there was an attestation given of the Lord's smelling in it a sweet savor, generally by an oracular communication of the Urim and Thummim, and sometimes by the suffusion of the miraculous cloud of God's glory through the sanctuary. Either of these was a sufficient testimony of the divine complacency, and proved that the people had not only been acquitted from condemnation by the expiation which had been made for them, but that, in virtue of the further process of consuming the incense, they had likewise received the additional blessings expressed in the pontifical benediction.

Now, whatever may be thought respecting the imper-

* Lev. xvi. 12, 13,

† Luke i. 9, 10.

fection of the figure,—an imperfection, however, which originated in the moral impossibility of any more significant type being constructed, and in the necessity which existed for the High Priest's being denied a continuance in the Holiest,—it is clear, from a variety of considerations, that the action which was thus superinduced upon the oblation before the mercy-seat, was designed as a prefiguration of the Redeemer's intercession. It was itself no part of the atonement. The intention of it was different; the expiation was declared to be complete without it; and it had as exclusive a concern with the obtainment for the people of subsequent blessings, as the sacrificial service which went before it had with their previous deliverance from guilt. There was, it is true, nothing in it which conveyed a direct or verbal expression of desire for mercies, nor was it accompanied, on the part of the officiate, with the oral utterance of petitions; but it was itself, as we are instructed by the divine word to believe, the symbol of ardent and prayerful aspirations of the heart, and, in unison with the highly figurative and ceremonial nature of the economy, it expressed them in a much more lively and striking way than could have been done by the mere emittance of sounds. It is hence in obvious allusion to it, and with the manifest design of portraying them in features of peculiar interest, and of affirming the ardor and importunacy of the spirit whence they proceeded, both that David said in reference to his prayers—‘Let them be set before thee as incense,’* and that the vision of John declares respecting those of the people of God in general, ‘Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.’†

* Ps. cxli. 2. † Rev. viii. 3.

In the latter passage, indeed, a luminous illustration is given of the intention and import of the entire transaction on the day of atonement. For, as the angel of whom it speaks is plainly none other than the Saviour in his state of exaltation, as he had been described in the immediately preceding context as 'a Lamb in the midst of the throne,' and as the incense with which he filled the censer was not the prayers of saints themselves but a material fetched from another quarter with which they were offered up; in what sense can we understand the declaration which follows,—'and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand,'*—but as a commentary on the fact, that, while the Jewish High Priest burnt the appointed incense in the Sanctuary, all the people whose sins had been expiated stood praying without, that, with the smoke which he raised, their supplications were wafted up with acceptance to the Shechinah, and that there was a consequent conferment upon them of further and higher mercies than the mere forgiveness of iniquity? Christ had just been set before us in the glory of his exalted state; affirmation had been made, in the contextual song of the ransomed, that his atonement had been practically efficient both in its purely piacular and in its propitiatory bearings; and the presentation and acceptance of his sacrifice in heaven had thus been recognized as completed and past event. When, therefore, he is, at this very crisis, introduced in the character of an angel or a High Priest burning incense before the throne, and wafting up with it the odors of his people's prayers, there is both a most evident allusion to the pontifical services of the Jewish sanctuary, and a significant explanation of the typical reference which they had to our Lord's celestial ministrations. The figurative

* Rev. viii. 4.

incense was burnt in the true Holy of Holies; the literal was consumed in that which was its type; and both services were subsequent to the sacrificial aspersion of blood before the mercy-seat, and were accompanied with the supplications of those who had previously been purified from guilt. There is hence, we apprehend, sufficient warrant for inferring, that the actions in the Jewish Holiest which followed the presentation of the piacular sacrifice to the Shechinah, were as truly prefigurative of the Saviour's intercession, as those which went before them were typical of his atonement.

From the parallel, then, which exists between the type and the antitype, we are disposed to regard the heavenly advocacy of Christ as founded on the oblation of himself in the direct presence of God, to understand its great object to be a prosecution of the same purposes of mercy which secured the release of his followers from condemnation, and to view the moral results of it as consisting principally in a commendation of them and their services to the Deity. It is hence that both his session at the right hand of his Father, and the intercession itself which, in this situation, he continually carries on, are so frequently connected by the scriptures, in a way of causation or at least of dependent posteriority, with his sacrificial appearance in the celestial sanctuary. 'This man, after he had offered'—and the offering here, from the comparison of it in the context, not with the services of the common priests who always acted in the Holy Place, but with those of the High Priest who served as invariably in the Holiest of all, is obviously the presentation of himself in heaven—'This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool; for, by one offering, he hath perfected for

ever those for whom he made atonement.* 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.†

In the first of these passages, the detention of the Redeemer in the Holiest, and his consequent exaltation to the right hand of the divine majesty, are declared to have resulted, not from the mere fact, but chiefly from the piacular perfection or the effective conclusiveness, of his celestial oblation. In the second, his death, resurrection, elevation to the throne, and intercession, are arranged not less certainly in the order of causal succession than in the order of historical occurrence; each of them is virtually shewn to have hung so necessarily upon that which went before it as to have derived from it its very existence; and both his sacrificial presentation of himself in heaven, and his consequent elevation to the right hand of God, are tacitly affirmed to have been indispensable prerequisites to the commencement or performance of his overt advocacy. It is hence abundantly evident that the whole of the intercessory function, both in its abstract existence, and in the actual discharge of its duties, acknowledges the sacrificial presentation in heaven as at once prior to it in the order of time, and the origin whence it sprang in the order of causation. The one arose as naturally and dependently out of the other, as the resurrection did out of the crucifixion; and just as the rising again from the dead was the carrying forward, in another of its aspects or departments, of the same work in the performance of which the death took place, so the perpetual intercession which is connected with the permanent session in glory,

* x. 12—14.

† Rom. viii. 33, 34.

is nothing else than a continuation, in another bearing of it, of the very undertaking which was concerned with the aspersion of blood before the throne. The two things are only successive links in the same great chain of performance; and they are so intimately interwoven as even to warrant our viewing the one to have been, in several respects, the first of the long line of acts which constitute the other. 'For Christ is not entered into the Holy Places made with hands which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often as the High Priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others.'*

There cannot be a moment's doubt that, in this statement of the apostle, we are to understand the phrase 'appearing in the presence of God for us,' as descriptive of the discharge of our Lord's intercessory function. For to what other subject can it apply? We are every where taught that intercession, in as far at least as God and not man is the direct object on which its ministrations terminate, is the grand master-work which the Saviour performs in heaven, that his preparing a place for his people, securing the mission to them of the Spirit's influences, and every thing else of a similar nature, are merely ramifications or particular portions of the general duty of the function, and that there is a consequent inclusion in it of all his performances on behalf of his followers with the Father. When, therefore, we are thus taught by the impossibility of its referring to any thing else, to regard his 'appearing in the presence of God for us' as identical with his forensic advocacy, and when we discover that the apostle both argues its permanency from the perfect moral grandeur and worth of the sacrifice by which he

* Heb. ix. 24, 25.

purified heaven, and identifies the rise or commencement of it with that definitive 'offering' of himself by which this purification was accomplished; it is exceedingly plain that we are to regard him as asserting, that his celestial oblation, and the first act of his intercession are, in a certain point of view, convertible phraseology. 'Crellius himself grants that the oblation by which Christ presented himself before God in heaven as a victim slain for our sins, is in fact not at all different from that advocacy on our behalf which is generally called his pleading or intercession. For that oblation being part of the priestly office connected with the care of our salvation was the intercession *begun*, and the intercession is the same oblation *continued*: these are only two branches of the same thing. Both are designated by the same expression where our High Priest is said to "appear in the presence of God for us." The following remark of Crellius is therefore perfectly correct: "The oblation and appearance of our High Priest and also his intercession, provided indeed that his appearance and intercession be taken, not for a mere approach of Christ to the Father, but, as they ought to be in this passage, for an approach connected with the care of our salvation, are in fact all one and the same."*

The primary object, no doubt, of his offering himself sacrificially in heaven, was, as we formerly endeavoured to shew, the accomplishment of the last act of his propitiatory work in legally purifying the exalted world to which his ransomed are to be everlastingly raised; but the very nature of this act was nevertheless such that, on account of its necessarily involving a commendation of them to his Father, and in consequence of its virtually containing a plea that, having been delivered from condemnation by the sacrifice which was then presented,

* Outram de Sacrif. D. II. Chap. vii. Sec. v.

they might, in addition to their extrication from guilt, be further raised to the possession of high and positive glory, it was, in its ultimate bearing, as certainly intercessory, as, in its more immediate design, it was purgatory of the heavenly sanctuary. It shewed, in the presence of God and of the angels, that, in as far as mere expiation was concerned, the work of man's redemption had been gloriously finished; and when, in addition to this, it exerted a legally purifying influence upon the holy places, it made a most explicit intimation of the Saviour's 'will,' that those for whose sins he had atoned should be with him where he was, that they might behold his glory. Nothing but his purpose to confer upon them 'spiritual blessings in the heavenlies' as a glorious appendage to their rescue from wrath, made the ministration either proper or necessary. The transaction must hence, with such a professed character and design, have been viewed by the Father when it actually took place, as a direct enunciation and enforcement of the Redeemer's wish. In as far, therefore, as the presentation of his sacrifice bore upon the obtainment for his people of those blessings which are posterior in the conferment of them to justification, and especially of the exalted boon of spending eternity amidst the inexpressible glories and felicities of the celestial world, in so far was it an act of overt advocacy, the first and the exemplar of all the long succession of pleadings which constitute his continual intercession.

Now, not only are we thus conducted to the conclusion, that our Lord's intercession is founded upon the completion of his piacular work, and that the first act of it was that influence which went forth from the presentation of his sacrifice immediately upon the Father's expressing towards it his acceptance and complacency; but we are likewise led indirectly to perceive that the entire

advocacy, during the whole extent of its duration, is in fact nothing else than the perpetual exhibition of himself before God as a sacrificial victim, and the close accompaniment of this with the expression of his purposes and desires respecting his people. This we already hinted, when we shewed that an overt intercession with God must necessarily consist in a display and an enforcement of those materials of a plea for men, which are furnished by a previously perfected atonement. And since these materials, in the case of the Christian redemption, are the mere facts of the Redeemer's having been immolated as a victim on the altar, and of his having subsequently presented himself in a sacrificial manner to God, in what way can these facts be more powerfully and appropriately rehearsed than by the perpetual and visible announcement of them in the continual exhibition of his sacrifice?

In those descriptions, accordingly, which the divine word contains of our Lord in respect to his appearance in heaven, there are not only portraiture of the surpassing glory with which he is surrounded, but pathetic mementoes of the shame and agonies of his crucifixion,—not only enraptured narratives of his procedure while he sits upon the throne, but impassioned allusions to his pains when he hung upon the Cross. ‘And I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.’* ‘These are they who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the

* Rev. v. 6.

throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* Such as this, is the current language of the Book of Revelation. In its delineation of his character in his exalted state, and in its relation of the deeds which in this character he performs, it almost invariably speaks of him as a Lamb, affirms that, under the emblem and with the appearance of a victim, he sits upon the throne, and not unfrequently represents him, in his very encompassment with the highest celestial splendor, as bearing the marks of having sacrificially poured out his blood. Nothing could declare more strikingly than this does, that his intercession and his display of himself as a slain Lamb, are things strictly identical.

To the same purpose is the graphic passage in the visions of Zechariah: 'Take silver and gold and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech the High Priest, and speak unto him saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts saying, Behold the man whose name is the Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.† It is to be remembered that the only part of his sacerdotal character which is collateral with his exaltation, is that of an intercessor, and that, as there was a necessary completion of his piacular work before he could occupy the throne either as a priest or as a king, the counsel of peace which exists between the two offices, in as far as it respects proper co-operation and contemporaneous existence, is solely confined, on the part of the priesthood, to his overt advocacy. It is in

* Rev. vii. 14, 16, 17. † Zech. vi. 11—13.

the discharge of this function that, in conjunction with the kingship,—an office the termination of whose ministrations is directly upon man,—he builds up the temple of the Lord. While, in immediate endeavours upon the faithful, the royalty is exerting itself for the preservation from surrounding dangers of the living stones in this spiritual edifice, the priesthood, by its pleadings for them with the Father, is securing on their behalf those renewed communications of divine influence by which they are strengthened and expanded, and made to grow up for an habitation of God through the Spirit. While, therefore, he ‘sits a priest upon his throne,’ and, in that morally elevated situation, enjoys all the glory of a triumphant mediatorship, the only sacerdotal work which he performs in it is that of intercession. Yet it is in this very condition and in the performance consequently of this very work, that he bears the marks of his ignominious death, and manifests himself in the character of a slaughtered Lamb. He is now exalted to the right hand of God; but he permits no one around him to forget his former substitutionary humiliation. He is surrounded with the adoring multitudes of angels and of ransomed men; but he always repeats the narrative of his having trod the wine-press alone when all had forsaken him and fled. He is now glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; but he directs the attention of all back to the ignominy of the Cross, when he was a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. He is now placed upon the throne; but he stands there a Lamb as if he had been slain. And all this he does entirely because, in his ever living to make intercession for his followers, the essence, the eloquence, and the power of his pleading, are the perpetual exhibition of his sacrifice.

While, however, Christ thus intercedes by a continual

display of his sacrificial character and merits, we are by no means to regard it as a mere dumb shew, but are to view it as necessarily accompanied with an expression of his desires respecting his people. An advocate feels that his principal business is the production and the luminous illustration of the facts on which he rests his plea; yet while he expatiates upon their various materials, argues their worth and conclusiveness, feels jealous of ever allowing them to be lost sight of, and introduces them and holds them up to view at every step of his argument, he knows the importance and necessity of stating with sufficient plainness the point which they are adduced to support or enforce. The end of his pleading is a prisoner's dismissal from the bar, or some other blessing being secured for his client; and the nature and extent of his aim must be accurately defined before the adduction of his plea can have either meaning or utility.

The case stands exactly thus with the Redeemer. Throughout the whole of his intercession, he has specific objects of desire before his mind; and, so far from carrying forward a general work which bears merely as a whole upon the congregated multitudes of his people, takes up the sheer question of their general well-being, and makes no specification of defined or individual blessings, he, in fact, conducts every thing with a pointed and explicit bearing upon every detached disciple of his followers, erects every separate want of each believer into the matter of a distinct request, and prays for him with an insulated particularity at all the successive junctures where he requires mercy or grace to help him in his need. Nothing is done by him in a way of either amassed supplication, or of wholesale distribution. There were, it is true, in his intercessory prayer upon earth, and there therefore may be in his intercessory prayers in heaven, petitions of an apparently

general and undefined description. They are so, however, merely in appearance and phraseology. In his own comprehensive mind while he utters them, the ideas which they express branch themselves out with as close an individual application to the various persons and personal necessities of those to whom they refer, as if all were particularized and enumerated.

Nor is it any objection to this, to allege the impossibility of overtaking by oral utterance the millions of statements which, on the idea of separate supplications for every want of each disciple, are supposed. For it is to be recollected that Christ is no longer confined to that tardy method of mental communication which, in order to make himself understood by his listening disciples around him, he was necessitated to employ on earth. What the precise mode of interchanging ideas is in heaven, we know not; but of this at least we may be certain, that it must be inconceivably more rapid, and one vastly more resembling the power of conveying a thousand sentiments by a momentary glance of the eye, than the slow and material medium of vocal enunciation. In the intercourse of the Father and the Son, while the latter, in the infinite comprehension of his mind, can in one moment instantaneously perceive all the necessities of his million followers, and form them into the materials of as many distinct petitions, the former, being in the Son and the Son in him, must manifestly recognize the requests in the very fact and instant of their mental existence. To allege, therefore, respecting an impossibility of communication, even were the subjects of it a thousandfold more numerous than they are, is to betray either an ignorance, a denial, or an oversight of the nature and dignity of the Saviour's person.

The pleading of Christ, then, consists-

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a continued display of his sacrificial character, connected with an expression of suitable desires for his people's well-being. Now this may instruct us, that just as we are to beware of supposing his intercessory requests to be communicated in the same manner as those which formed the matter of his prayers on earth, so neither are we to imagine that they proceed from him as those did, strictly speaking, in the capacity of a suppliant. The blessings for which he now prays, accompanied as the supplication for them is with the production of his own piacular worth and righteousness as the meritorious reason of his asking them, are, when properly viewed, more demanded by him as a thing of right, than petitioned for as a matter of favor.

Nor does this, in the slightest, destroy their absolute unmeritedness, on the part of those who receive them, or in any degree derogate from the sovereignty of divine grace. Men no more deserve them for their own sakes, when, on the ground of Christ's propitiation, he can demand them as a dispensation of equity, than if they were conferred upon them without any reference to a mediatorship whatever. The grand, and indeed the only difference between the conferment of them through such a medium, and the bestowment of them without any regard to it, is a consistency, in the one case, of the gratuitous distribution with the divine purity and justice, which could not exist in the other. The advancement of the piacular plea, while it shews that the boon which the Saviour asks has been merited by his own vicarious performances, makes it at the same time manifest, that the conferment of it will effect no compromise of the law's demands upon the persons who receive it. This is the only thing which distinguishes the gifts which for his sake are bestowed upon his disciples, from any we might suppose men to obtain by a direct administration of God. The distinction, therefore,

is one which can affect neither the freeness of grace itself, nor the personal unworthiness of the ransomed in the reception of its mercies.

The bestowment of these proceeds entirely upon the merits of the Redeemer, and directly assumes the total demerit of believers. It makes not the remotest interference with the proper sovereignty or unshackledness of the divine bounty; and, in his referring to the morally grand and meritorious actions of his sacrificial and substitutionary procedure as the ground on which he expects the communication of spiritual blessings to his people, it regards our Lord as merely requiring what is equitably due to him in virtue of his having completed the mediatorial work. In the constitution relative to human redemption which was established with him, it was expressly provided that his perfecting a work of satisfaction and propitiation would terminate in those moral results which necessarily involve the conferment upon men of the benefits for which he supplicates. When, consequently, he holds himself up to view as a sacrificed victim, and, in companionship with the exhibition, urges his Father's promotion of his people's moral welfare, he merely memorializes him of the equity of his requests, shews that what he asks has been fully provided for in the performances of his Messiahship, and argues that, since the cause has put itself into successful operation, the effects of it, in the spiritual well-being of believers, are necessarily and spontaneously to be expected. It is in consequence of this, that the language of his intercessory prayer in our world has so much more the appearance of demand than of request,—*'I will;'* and it is on this account, also, that his pleading has a certain and uniform prevalence. His sacrifice is always referred to as a sufficient ground of claim upon the mercies which he prays for; and, in connexion with the supplications which accompany its con-

tinual presentation, it is always regarded with God's highest complacency. There are hence an eloquence and a power in such a significant recital of his tremendous sacrificial agonies, which give a sure and an unlimited success to all the Saviour's intercessions.

The tone or the spirit which thus pervades the celestial advocacy of Christ, is owing, we have seen, to the fact that the function is founded upon the previous completion of the work of atonement. Now, in this same fact, lies the reason of the truth, which as yet we have merely assumed, that none but those for whom the expiation was made, and not even they until they have actually believed, are the persons for whom the intercession is conducted.

The fundamental design of it is to take up the work of the faithful's personal salvation at the point where it is left by the function of atonement. Now as the direct dealings of expiation with a sinner do not terminate till the transpiration of the justifying act in which the saving transference to him of the sacrificial righteousness which it embodies takes place, it cannot, in the nature of things, be till he is a justified man that his circumstances and welfare can form the proper object of intercessory ministrations. Just as, in an abstract and historical way, the latter function is, in its very existence, posterior to the accomplishment and acceptance of the entire work of the former; so, in the immediate reference which both have to the realization of their moral results in the actual salvation of men, atonement must have finished its part in setting them free from the guilt of sin and the curse of the law, before intercession can recognize them as persons who have any concern with the materials of the plea by which all its pleadings are enforced. The one has no less certainly to do with justification as its immediate and pe-

culiar province than the other is specifically concerned with the progressive growth of the individual in grace. As, therefore, the act of acquittal and the work of sanctification are as necessarily successive in the order of occurrence, as the two departments of the priestly ministration from which they are respectively derived, it must be evident that, before a man can be in the way of realizing the one, he must be a partaker of the benefits of the other; that his enjoyment of gospel peace or his possession of personal holiness previous to justification are prevented by both a legal and a moral impossibility, and that, until he be brought into a state of acceptance with God, and can look to Christ as 'the propitiation for his sins,' he cannot be interested in him as an advocate whom he has with the Father.

They are only those, accordingly, who have 'come unto God by him,' or, as the phrase by an examination of it in the various passages where it occurs may be easily proved to mean, those who have, by the faith of the operation of God, received the gospel testimony, whom the scriptures represent as the objects of the Redeemer's intercession, and whom, in consequence of this, 'he is able to save to the uttermost.*' They are viewed as living monuments of his ability, in virtue of the worth and efficacy of the sacrifice which he offered for sin, to save men from the condemning power of guilt. They have already, on account of his perfect sacrificial obedience having been imputed to them, been made partakers of a begun salvation. And, although the piacular function has now completed its immediate work, and, having freed them from condemnation, leaves them in the possession of many things which must be done away before they are 'saved to the uttermost,' yet another function commences its

* Heb. vii. 25.

ministrations for them at the very point where they had been left, and, taking up and applying the peculiar process in all its practical and reflective references to their inherent purity of nature, and setting on foot an agency strictly adapted to the perfecting of all that concerns them, carries forward the work of their personal salvation through all its successive stages of holiness and conflict and supply of spiritual needs, till it issues in 'complete redemption.' The power of Christ to save from condemnation, originates in his atonement; and his ability to carry forward, to the uttermost point, the salvation which deliverance from guilt begins, interweaves itself, in the same way, with his intercession. He has expiated sin, and the result of this is the justification of believers: he ever lives to intercede for them, and the effects of this are the 'working within them of the whole good pleasure of God's goodness,' and the 'performing of the good work which has been begun until the day of Jesus Christ.' When, therefore, he is represented as pleading in heaven specifically for those who 'have come unto God,' we are necessitated to regard the statement as a conclusive proof that he intercedes only for the justified, and that his saviourship, as an intercessor, is grafted entirely upon the legal transmission to those who believe, of his vicarious righteousness as a sacrifice.

When, however, we remember the language of the intercessory prayer on earth, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word,'* it may not, at first sight, be so apparent, that, while none but believers have an interest in Christ's overt advocacy, not even they are interceded for previously to their actual reception of the reconciliation. The words which we have quoted, seem to imply that, confined

* John xvii. 20.

though his pleading is to the well-being of those whom the Father has given him, it nevertheless directs its attention to all those yet in their sins 'who are ordained to eternal life', and, regarding them as prospectively of the saved, throws its arms round them as well as the already justified, and holds both classes up to God in the same beseeching embrace. Yet, if we recollect who they are for whom supplication had been made in the preceding context, and who are affirmed not to be the exclusive objects of intercession, and if, especially, we attend to the peculiar nature of the phraseology employed throughout the entire prayer, all this will evince itself to be a mere appearance without a reality, and evidence sufficient will be afforded of the confinement of the advocacy to those who have actually believed. The Redeemer had prayed in a pointed manner for the eleven disciples who were then in his company; he had said, 'As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world,'* and had used a variety of other phrases which had a more emphatic application to his apostles than they could have had to his followers in general; and, lest he should have been interpreted as though he interceded for none beside, he subjoined, 'I pray not for these alone, but for them also who shall believe through their word.' As apostles were the instruments to be employed in propagating the gospel and evangelizing mankind, they were, in the first instance, and with the greatest particularity, the objects of his solicitude; yet those, at the same time, are not to be overlooked, who, though they occupy the subordinate ground of mere private discipleship, need as much as the most gifted to be 'kept from the evil which is in the world,' and require to be preserved by the mighty 'power of God through faith unto salvation.' Though

* John xvii. 18.

different as to the expansiveness, yet alike as to the fact, the Saviour's pleading expatiated on the necessities and welfare of both. The distinction, therefore, does not refer to future believers as compared with those who were then in a state of actual union with Christ. It merely points out the difference between the believership of apostles who had been converted by the Lord's own preaching, and been commissioned to perform the responsible work of an embassy from God to men, and that of others who should believe only through their word, and occupy situations of second rate importance in the Church, —a difference which, though it affected, in such a material way, the respective situations of the two classes of the faithful, made no inroad whatever upon the equal inclusion of both in the Saviour's intercession.

To suppose the distinction to be otherwise, and to imagine that believers only in purpose and not in reality have, along with the actual people of God, supplication made on their behalf for 'the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies,' is, in fact, to destroy altogether that line of demarcation which the scriptures every where so carefully draw between the clean and the unclean, and to maintain that the same boons are equally conferrable upon the believing and the impenitent. Previous to justification, the elect are just as certainly dead in sins, under condemnation, and possessed of all the characteristics of 'the world,' as 'the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction;' and the one are, upon the same principle and with equal certainty, denied an interest in the Saviour's advocacy as the other. Before, therefore, they can, with any show of propriety, and without an utter reversion of that beautiful and well-regulated order of things by which God never puts first what ought to be last, be held up as the befitting objects of prayer for victory over spiritual enemies, for being kept from the evil which is in the world, for the enjoyment of

continual fellowship with the Deity, for ultimate glorification in heaven, and for all the other kindred blessings which are supplicated in our Lord's intercession, they must be 'called and chosen and faithful,' and be brought into that moral situation in which the fact of their having already been justified, evinces their legal fitness for being sanctified and glorified. It is, consequently, neither for the impenitent in general, nor for those of them who may hereafter believe, but exclusively for the renewed in heart, that the Redeemer intercedes at the right hand of God. 'I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.'*

In order, then, to acquire a full understanding of the place which intercession holds in effecting personal salvation, of the various blessings which, in virtue of it, are conferred upon the faithful, and of the manner in which, in the direct bearing of the one and the reflective influence of the other upon moral renovation, it connects itself with the work of atonement, we need only to take a view of the situation which a believer occupies subsequent to his justification, and of the successive and diversified circumstances in which he is placed till the completion of his redemption.

At the moment of his possessing the faith of the gospel, 'he is buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so he also walks in newness of life.'† In consequence of the Redeemer's having acted and suf-

* John xvii. 8, 9.

† Rom. vi. 4.

ferred, not less in a substitutionary than in a public capacity, and of his having represented all his people in such a way that his standing or falling or rising was identified with theirs, the believer is viewed in law as having died with Christ in his death to the legal dominion of sin, as having been sepulchred with him in his entombment from the condemning power of guilt, as having expired with him in the extinction of that life which was forfeited to the demands of justice, and as having risen with him in his resurrection to a new and altogether different life, in which he can never again become obnoxious to judicial sufferings or death. In virtue of the Saviour's having sustained, from his incarnation to his crucifixion, the character of man's substitute, and on account of his having borne, by imputation, their iniquities, the life which he possessed on earth was entirely forfeited to the penal sanction of the divine law. During the whole period of its continuance, it subjected him to all the evil consequences of his people's guilt, and, in a penal point of view, erected him into their public representative in their state of condemnation. But just as, in consequence of this, they were then, along with their public head, under the curse of the law and judicially exposed to death: so, subsequent to his 'dying unto sin' and making an end of it, and to his resurrection from the dead in miraculous attestation to the truth of his having satisfied every demand of law, and 'destroyed sin in the flesh,' they are legally held to live in him, and to be consequent possessors of a life in which they can never come into condemnation. He and they are so intimately united, that whatever is true respecting his legal situation, must be equally true with regard to theirs. Death has no more power over him; and it can have no longer dominion over them. He is for ever freed from obnoxiousness to vindictive suffering; and they can never be subjected to the curse or

any of its effects. The guilt which was laid upon him, has been definitively removed from his head; and the sin of both their original and their actual character, will never rise up in judgment against them. He 'was dead and is alive for evermore,' and, at his right hand, remains in everlasting acceptance with God; and they 'have been quickened together with him, and have been raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.*' 'Because he lives, they shall live also.' 'If,' they say, 'we be dead with Christ,' if we are thus viewed in law as having died with him on the Cross to the condemning power of iniquity, 'we believe that we shall also live with him,'—live with him for ever in his present state, possessed of an endless life which he obtained at his resurrection, and eternally hedged round from the possibility of penal interference,—'knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.†' By this union, therefore, with the Redeemer in justification, believers are so completely and permanently delivered from their accursedness as to be participants of a life, which is not more certainly one of acceptance with God in its nature, than it is strictly everlasting in its duration.

With all this, however, it is plain that there are still many things in them which must be done away before they are perfectly redeemed from all the consequences of their apostacy, that there are numerous pollutions in their heart which must be washed away in a progressive process of sanctification, that there are powerful spiritual enemies whom they must combat and overcome, and that they will not consequently 'be saved to the uttermost'

* Eph. ii. 5, 6.

† Rom. vi. 8—10.

till they become possessors of a moral life, or of an inherent holiness, as perfect and confirmed as the legal life which was conferred upon them in justification.

Now it is plain, from the very nature of this life,—a life which constitutes a ‘living unto God’ in respect to the everlasting enjoyment of his favor, which contains in it the ingredients of ordained impeccability, and which bids a consequent defiance, from the moment of its creation, to every possible claim or seizure of the condemning sentence of the law,—that it must, in some way or other, embody a security, first for the accompanying acquirement of a moral life, perfect in all the materials of holiness, and then for its eternal protection from every destroying or degenerating influence. This it must manifestly do, in order even to its own continuance. For, were no such spotless purity entailed and placed in its companionship, were the entire or the partial ingredients of the ‘death in trespasses and sins,’ which preceded justification, allowed to remain, and were they permitted to exert the influence over the heart and life which is inseparable from their very existence; it is obvious, that, whenever the individual ceased to have all accusations against him answered and repelled by the presentation on his behalf of Christ’s sacrifice in heaven,—an event which would take place simultaneously with the cessation of the Redeemer’s priesthood, or, as we shall afterwards see, at the close of the Christian dispensation, when the mediatorial kingdom will be delivered up, and God will be all and in all,—the pollutions which continued in his heart would immediately burst forth in the production of a guilt which, in consequence of its having then nothing in a mediatorship by which its effects might be averted, would inevitably entail condemnation, and destroy the legal life or the state of acceptance with God which had been hitherto enjoyed. Except in the way in which the sins of believers are treated

while they are on earth, it is impossible that the slightest depravity could exist without instantly exposing the subject of it to the wrath of a vindictive retribution. When the faithful sin, they have an advocate with the Father, and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses them from all guilt; but the moment that the pleading of their intercessor either absolutely or virtually ends, they can be preserved from a fresh subjection to the curse by nothing but a personal, complete, and confirmed moral purity. If they have this, their salvation will be permanent; but if they want it, immediate and certain ruin must be the consequence. Since, therefore, such would be the effects of wanting a thorough and inviolable holiness, and since the legal life which is possessed in a state of legal union with Christ is necessarily eternal; it must be evident, that acquittal from condemnation contains the pledge and the stamina of perfect moral purity, and that there is consequently an inseparable connexion between the justifying act and a process of sanctification.

Along with this conclusion, then, let us look at the immediate instrument,—the moral influence of the gospel—by which holiness is produced. It is by the incorruptible seed of the word that men are born again, or it is by this that regeneration, or the first act in the work of sanctification, is effected; and it is by the same instrument that the process thus commenced, is conducted through all its successive stages, and carried on to perfection. 'Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you.' 'Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.' Yet the mere letter of the word, so far from either originating or cherishing moral life, killeth; and it possesses no intrinsic efficacy whatever, either to implant a single grace or to eradicate a solitary corruption. In order to its acting as 'a fire that burneth, and a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces,' it must be

pressed upon the conscience in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. It is only the Spirit that quickeneth. It is this alone which renders the word effective in accomplishing either the first or the subsequent acts of sanctification.

Now, as the word of God derives all its power of moral renovation from divine agency; so the mission and the operations of the Spirit by which this power is incorporated with it, both result from Christ's appearance as an intercessor in heaven, and recognize the completion and the acceptance of his sacrificial work. The sentence of acquittal which justifies the sinner, is pronounced upon him in virtue of the imputation to him of Christ's vicarious righteousness; and the production, in his heart, of the fruits of the Spirit, is, in the same way, a consequence of the Redeemer's perpetual presentation of his sacrifice in heaven. It was hence expedient for him to go away; for if he had not entered the celestial sanctuary, the Comforter would not have come to his followers. He would not have appeared before God, presented to him his immolated sacrifice, nor, on the ground of its presentation, commenced his heavenly advocacy. There would, consequently, have been no effusion of the Spirit's sanctifying influences. Since, however, he has gone away, and ever lives to intercede for his people, he secures for them the operations of divine agency, and prays the Father to give them the Comforter, who may abide with them for ever, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. 'I will send him unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth who proceedeth from the Father, and he shall testify of me.' 'He will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things

that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you.*

No language could declare more plainly than this, not only that the Spirit is sent forth in answer to Christ's intercessory requests, but that, in addition to this, all the items of the work which, at each successive season, and in each individual believer, he is commissioned to accomplish, are definitely marked out in the Saviour's petitions for the blessings which he is sent to confer. Not merely, in the statement 'he shall not speak of himself,' is it asserted, that his is no agency which operates independently of the Redeemer's work, that it is one which grafts itself upon the completion of his sacrifice, and that it interweaves itself with the practical developement of the scheme of redemption; but in the language, 'whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak,'* and 'he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you,' it is likewise stated, that he comes forth with a commission expressed in the very words which he hears in the mediatorial intercession, that the blessings which he confers are primarily secured and bestowed by Christ, and that every thing he performs is included among the moral results of the Saviour's work. When our Lord avers, therefore, that all things which the Father hath are his, and when he speaks of this as the reason of his having said that the Comforter should take of his and shew it to his disciples; it is obvious that he refers to his right as mediator to all the blessings conferrable on man which are in the possession of the Godhead to bestow, that he views his claim to them as inseparably connected with the perfection and acceptance of his sacrificial work, that he pledges himself to assert it in forensically urging the plea of his mediatorial righteousness, and that he avers the mission of the Spirit, and all the consequences of his

* John xv. 26, xiv. 16, 17, and xvi. 7, 13—15.

agency, to be things which he himself has secured for his people, which result immediately from his intercession, and which, were it not for his continual appearance on our behalf before God, would never have been bestowed.

Now, as, on the one hand, it is thus in consequence of Christ's celestial advocacy that the Spirit produces in believers purity, knowledge, comfort, victory over spiritual enemies, and all the other ingredients of sanctification; so, on the other, are all these blessings experimentally conferred through the instrumentality or the moral influence of the word. In every detached doctrine, as well as in the general structure of the gospel, there is an admirable and minute adaptation to the character and circumstances of man, as a creature who is depraved in himself and surrounded with numberless decoyments to iniquity,—an adaptation which acquires, in the accompanying operations of the Holy Ghost, all the energy of a moral omnipotence to sweep away every description of pollutedness, and to accomplish a complete moral renovation of our nature. 'The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*' From the moment in which it is believed, it operates in a steady, progressive, and sanctifying manner upon the heart. As soon as it is spiritually understood, it effects a total change in the moral nature and direction of all the affections and propensities; and the longer the influence of it is put forth, the more thoroughly does it deliver the individual from the power of indwelling corruption. It is thus 'by the washing of water with the word' that Christ, 'having loved the Church and given himself for it, sanctifies it, cleanses it, and presents it to himself a glorious Church,

* Rom. i. 16.

not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.*

The moral influence of the truth, however, cannot exist in a state of unconnectedness with the knowledge and faith of its doctrines. It is, on the contrary, realized in that very belief of them in which justification takes place. And it is in the fact of the one being embedded in the other, that we discover both the inseparable connexion which exists between legal and moral life, and the respective correspondency of these with the two sacerdotal functions of the Saviour.

That which is believed is of necessity a thing which is known and understood. What we are ignorant of, can be a matter neither of positive belief, nor of its opposite. Since, therefore, in the act of union with Christ,—in that act in which the sinner is regarded in law as having died with him to the judicial dominion of death, and as having risen with him to the possession of a life of endless acceptance with God,—there is possessed by the individual a rational faith in the gospel, and since the assent which he yields to it assumes his acquaintanceship henceforward with its doctrines; the moral influence which proceeds from it, must begin to exert itself upon his heart in the very act of acquittal, must then infuse into his soul the germ of that moral life which it forthwith carries on to maturity, and must hence contemporize and interweave the acts of justification and the new birth. The gospel is the instrumental originator of his change of heart, as well as of his change of relative condition. Through the faith of its statements, it simultaneously rescues him from condemnation, and delivers him from the single-handed dominion of depravity. In his believing it, he is, at the same moment, by the same means, and through the same

* Eph. v. 25—27.

agency, justified from guilt, and made a begun partaker of personal holiness. 'In Christ Jesus,'—in the very act and instant of his union with the Saviour,—'the law of the spirit of life,' or the gospel borne home with the power of a law upon his conscience by the life-giving agency of the Holy Ghost, 'makes him free from the law of sin and death,'—from that practical influence of corruption in the soul of which spiritual or moral death consists.* When the moral energy of the truth is felt by him, he is, along with the experience of it, viewed as in that situation in reference to the suretyship and representative righteousness of the Redeemer, which involves his possession of legal life. It is impossible, on the one hand, to obtain sanctification without connexion with Christ as a surety and a public head; and it is equally impossible, on the other, to enter this relationship without contemporaneously participating the commencement of a holiness which will terminate in perfect and confirmed moral purity. Justification, or the conferment of legal life, takes place in union with the Redeemer; this union is simultaneous with the acquirement of faith in the gospel; this faith invariably embodies a spiritual knowledge of the doctrines of Christianity; these doctrines necessarily exert a sanctifying influence upon the heart; and thus, in a state of inseparable and glorious unitedness, legal and moral life, as well as 'mercy and truth,' with which they are respectively concerned, go before God's face, and fall into the arms of the believing sinner.

Now in the same way that this connexion exists, does the corresponding connexion appear between atonement and intercession. It is by being viewed in law as having died and risen with Christ, that union with him comes to secure the sinner's justification. Legal life is hence to

* Rom. viii. 2.

be regarded as a result immediately and specifically of the work of atonement. And while it is by the moral influence of the truth that sanctification is produced, yet as this influence is imparted to it only in virtue of the Spirit's agency, as the Spirit is sent forth in answer to the Saviour's heavenly advocacy, and as the amount and description of moralizing power with which he invests the divine word are defined in the petitions of every successive pleading, all the ingredients and expansions of moral life which are realized in consequence by the believer, are to be viewed as accruing directly from intercession. The function of atonement concerns itself with deliverance from guilt; and the function of intercession is discharged for the accomplishment of sanctification. They are connected in a similar way with legal and moral life, and conjointly constitute the source whence they respectively have their origin. Christ is the representative or public head of his people. In this capacity, he died on the Cross and ascended into heaven. The former event laid the foundation and furnished the materials of the ministration which he conducts in virtue of the latter. In the one, believers die to the law and are made participants of legal life, and in the other, they receive the mission of the Spirit and possess all the consequent blessings of moral renovation. The same tie of inseparable sisterhood, therefore, which unites moral and legal life in the transmission of them to the sinner, is found to bind, in closest alliance, the works of intercession and atonement from which they proceed. The two functions are mutually dependent and interwoven, both in the abstract performance of their ministrations, and in the believer's experimental possession of their results. While they have each its own peculiar province in the work of personal salvation, they are yet so intimately connected in effecting it, that, when contemplated as the agency by which it is ac-

completed, they are not and never can be separated. The apparatus for performing it is neither atonement nor intercession by itself, nor is it each in a state of detached and independent ministration, but it is both harmoniously co-operative in themselves, and inseparably united in their development.

When the nature of this practical connexion, then, which subsists between the two functions is properly understood, the eyes are fully opened both to perceive the way in which intercession effects the believer's sanctification, and to see in its true light the reflective bearing which atonement has upon the moral renovation of the heart. Holiness is produced by the agency of the Divine Spirit operating through the moral influence of the gospel; and as this again is altogether in consequence of the advocacy of Christ, and as the suppression of corruption, the illumination of the mind, the strengthening of faith, the confirmation of hope, and the increase of love,—blessings which constitute sanctification, and which the Holy Spirit, as a commissioned agent, immediately confers,—are marked out in the various and successive petitions which the advocacy contains, it is as a direct result of intercession that one and all of them are bestowed. Yet as the prevalency of the Saviour's requests is derived entirely from the continual presentation of his accepted sacrifice, and as all the practical petitions as well as the abstract existence of his overt advocacy are wholly founded on the completion of his sacrificial work, every blessing enjoyed, subsequently to justification, by a believer, is to be regarded as springing just as certainly in a reflective way from his atonement, as it is to be viewed as coming directly from his intercession.

While the specific object of the one function is to effect justification, and of the other to accomplish personal holi-

ness, each, in the prosecution of its particular end, acts in a way of subserviency to the other. Atonement frees the sinner from condemnation; and, though it then finishes the work of its peculiar department, it erects upon itself and sustains, as a foundation does its superstructure, another function for adding to the legal life which has been produced, a full moral transformation of heart. Intercession concerns itself specifically with sanctification; but, while this includes the whole performances of its immediate sphere, it looks back to what has been effected by atonement, practically accomplishes its reflective ends, and gives eternal permanency to its work. The one gives being to legal life; but it depends upon the other for producing what will make it durable: the other infuses moral life, and carries it forward to perfection; but it borrows from its predecessor all the materials with which it performs its task. In the one lies the origin of the legal life with which the production of the moral life, accomplished by the other, is intertwined. The former, in furnishing a vicarious righteousness to be imputed to the sinner for justification, embeds in it a pattern of moral excellence, and lays it down as the influential model and means of his subsequent sanctification: the latter takes up and exhibits the renovating example committed to its care, and imparts to it all the moral influence by which it answers the various purposes for which it was framed. Atonement without intercession would leave the sinner in possession of a legal life which, for want of an agency to apply the furnished materials for adding to it a perfect moral renovation, he might eventually lose: intercession without atonement would be a mere unmeaning apparatus, destitute both of a proper subject to operate upon, and of the necessary materials for accomplishing its work. Just, therefore, as neither justification nor sanctification can of itself constitute salva-

tion, or exist in a state of moral disjunction from its fellow, and just as both must not only enter conjointly into complete redemption, but must also be viewed the one as hanging on the other for its very existence, and the former as depending on the latter for giving it permanency and value ; so, upon the same principle, are the two functions, by which they are respectively produced, never to be thought of as separate or insulated agencies, but are to be regarded as standing in an attitude of mutual reference and subordination prospective in the one case and retrospective in the other, and as being inseparably coalescent in one great chain of performance for bringing ‘ peace on earth, good will to men, and glory to God in the highest.’

It may now, then, we apprehend, be clearly seen in what light we are to contemplate the intercession of Christ in respect to the way in which its moral results are realized, and in what points of view we are to regard it as an agency in the work of man’s salvation. They are only believers, or those who, in a state of union with the Saviour, have practical interest in the peculiar process which gives rise to it, on whose behalf it carries on its ministrations ; and the blessings which it employs itself to secure for them, include all the departments of that ultimately perfect moral renovation on which expiation reflectively bears, and which terminates in those who are the subjects of it being presented faultless, without spot, and blameless before Christ at his appearing.

Nor, when we contemplate the Redeemer’s intercession as having for its work the sanctification of his people,—a work which may, at first sight, appear to imply the termination of its services not upon God but upon man,—is it to be thought, that we have affirmed what is incon-

sistent with the definition of a priesthood which, in a former chapter, we gave and defended. The office, as we then shewed, is doubtless, in all its parts, an advocacy with the Deity on behalf of our race, and addresses to him exclusively both its piacular and intercessory ministrations. Yet it is in perfect harmony with this view of it, that we understand the moral results of intercession to be identical with the personal holiness of believers. For it is to be observed that, while both this function and the piacular address themselves to God, they do so, nevertheless, *on behalf of* men, and that, at the same time, consequently, that their back, in their officiations, is turned completely round upon the sinner, the blessings which they secure are all communicated directly to himself. There is an agency in the mediatorship for securing the blessings of salvation, and in respect to this it addresses itself to the Deity; but there is also in it an agency for bestowing them, and in regard to this it addresses itself to men. The priesthood of Christ constitutes the former of these; and his regal and prophetic offices constitute the latter. Now, as both agencies are simultaneously in operation, or as the Mediator, in laying his hand upon both parties, is to be viewed as performing alike the one and the other class of services in his mediatorship; so are the blessings of sanctification to be understood as at the same moment secured by his intercession, and conferred by his teaching and kingship. They include both the removal of ignorance and the destruction of depravity, or, what is strictly synonymous, moral instruction and victory over spiritual enemies. While, therefore, both descriptions of blessings are bestowed, they are to be regarded as at the same time the practical fruits of Christ's work as a prophet and a king, and the moral results of his ministrations as an intercessor. In the latter capacity, he asks and obtains the Holy Spirit's influences to enlighten

and purify his people ; and, in the former, he actually employs them for conferring the boons he has supplicated and secured. When, consequently, we consider sanctification as *a work*, it is the fruit of the Redeemer's teaching and rule ; but when we regard it as *a blessing*, it is a consequence of his pleading. When we view it as something produced by active operation on the believer's heart and mind, it is accomplished by our Lord as a prophet and a king ; but when we contemplate it as something bestowed by God in virtue of its having been asked and merited by the Mediator who pleads for it, it is then effected by him as an intercessor. And as it is entirely in the last of these respects that we have been speaking of it, every thing which we have said is in perfect unison with the doctrine, that a priesthood is an advocacy with God for our race.

Since, then, we are in this way to understand intercession as holding the same efficient place in securing all the blessings of sanctification, that atonement does in effecting the sinner's deliverance from guilt, since the legal and moral life which are respectively produced by them have been shewn to constitute the entire amount of salvation, and since the manner has been explained in which the moral results of the intercessory ministrations are commensurate with all the ingredients of a believer's personal holiness, it may be thought that the subject of the celestial advocacy is exhausted, and that there remains no other point of view in which its services can be supposed to bear upon his well-being. If justification and sanctification be the whole of personal salvation, and if both be produced in virtue of the two priestly functions of the Saviour, where, it may be asked, is the additional blessing which either function can be occupied in conferring? Yet from both, such additional blessings in reality

accrue,—blessings which, though they are embedded in the direct moral results of the respective functions, are, in several points of view, to be regarded as a moral consequence of the realization of them, and are necessarily distinct from them in their conferment.

One of these,—the changing of the vile body, and the fashioning of it like unto Christ's glorious body,—has already been shewn to originate in the work of expiation; and another of no less importance,—the answering of all accusations against the faithful, while they are in the world,—may be seen to spring, in a similar way, from the work of intercession. The former does not, in strict language, belong to the act of justification, but, legally included in it and flowing from it by way of moral consequence, assumes the form and sustains the character of a separate result; yet, since nothing but the peculiar circumstances of man on earth prevents its being contemporaneous and incorporated with the act of acquittal, it abstractly and in law is a blessing conveyed in the very creation of legal life. Now, upon nearly the same principle, the other blessing,—the answering of all accusations against believers while they are on earth,—though it cannot be viewed as a part of sanctification itself, yet as it is rendered necessary by nothing else than the peculiar and progressive manner in which that work is effected, is to be understood as abstractly belonging to it, and as being therefore among the special fruits of intercession. While, consequently, the removal of guilt and deliverance from pollution constitute complete redemption, and while both result from the two sacerdotal functions with which they are respectively concerned, there are things in the situation of man in reference to his practical reception of them, which make it indispensable for some of their ingredients to come to him in the shape of superinduced blessings, and which render it necessary that, in addition

to the overt and wholesale effects of the advocacy and the expiation, protection from all condemnatory blame should, as much on the one hand, assume the character of a distinct moral result of intercession, as the resurrection and glorification of the body comes, on the other, in the form of a separate blessing from the atonement.

It is to be remembered, that, when a believer is justified and regenerated, and during the whole period in which the work of his sanctification is going forward, there are remaining corruptions in his heart, and that, so long as he is in the world, he is led on by their workings within him to the commission of many sins against the divine law. The delinquences of which he is guilty, are intrinsically possessed of as much moral blame, as though they were the iniquities of impenitent men. He still continues under the law as a rule of life, and is bound, by all the obligations of moral accountability, to yield a perfect obedience to its precepts. It was republished and explained, in the extent and spirituality of its commandments, by the Saviour himself. In consequence of its being a transcript of the moral character of God, and in virtue of its constituting the rule by which, either in perfect obedience to its injunctions, or in subjection to the judicial awards of its penal sanction, the peace and stability of the divine administration are preserved, it can neither be annulled in its authority, nor relaxed in its requirements. It is, in all its several parts, expressly repromulgated to believers in the inspired epistles to the primitive churches. Hence, when any of its precepts are violated by a child of God, it declares him to have as fully and aggravatedly committed sin, as though he had never been brought into a state of acceptance with the Deity. The fact of his having been acquitted from all his guilt, does not make it less true, that he is a transgressor; nor can it tend, in the remotest way, either to alter

the moral quality of his actions in themselves, or to render that an object of the law's complacency or connivance which is pointedly proscribed by it, and against which its penal threatenings are directed. Sin, or want of conformity to the law, is still, in all its dimensions, sin, by whomsoever committed; nor can its intrinsic nature and deserts be altered by any casual circumstances whatever.

Now, were there no prospective influence in the act of justification, or no security afforded by it of the believer being permanently shielded from condemnation, it is manifest that he would require to be justified afresh after every wrong which he does, that he would speedily fall from his state of acceptance after every successive remission, and that, if he should ever survive the slippery and stupefying course of incessantly losing and regaining the divine favor, and should ultimately escape the sore hazard of dying after all on the deadly side of this perpetual alternation, his justifications and condemnations would be as numerous as the numberless sins of his lifetime. There could, in such a state of things, be, in proper language, no process of moral purification. Sanctification, commencing as it does at the justifying act, would be constantly turned back to its rudiments, perpetually beginning, perpetually frustrated, perpetually thrown round to a new commencement. Yet progressive advancement is essential to its very nature,—is indispensable both to its own existence, and to the efficiency of the Saviour's intercession. The path of the justified must be like that of 'the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' His heart, in order to the acquirement of the complete moral life which includes the ends of both the reflective influence of atonement and the direct bearings of the celestial advocacy, must be gradually transformed into the divine image, 'from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.' As, therefore, such a steady

progression could not be effected, nor sanctification, in the right use of words, exist, if the subject of it were to fall under the curse of the law on account of his daily sins, it is obvious that there must be something in the administration of the Christian economy, by which the condemning power of his guilt is constantly neutralized.

Now, as the necessity for this originates solely in the progressive nature of moral renovation,—a work, the performance of which, belongs peculiarly to intercession,—it must be in that function that the agency operates by which the condemning power of the believers' iniquities is destroyed. Were his personal holiness to be instantaneously brought to perfection, there would be no corruption left in him subsequent to his faith in the gospel; and, freed entirely from this, there would be no fresh sin committed by him, and no consequent need for averting its penal consequences. But since such is the constitution of things, in reference to man, that perfect purity is unattainable till his transition from the world, and since the whole process of his sanctification is entrusted to the influence of the Saviour's intercessory ministrations, it belongs to them to provide against every thing which might interfere with the accomplishment of their designs, and it is consequently their's to dash aside the retribution of a believer's daily offences.

Now the way in which all this is done, is extremely simple,—consisting of the same acts of perpetually presenting Christ's sacrifice in heaven, which constitute his entire intercession. At the acquittal of his people from condemnation, there is, in the imputation to them of his sacrificial and vicarious righteousness in virtue of which it takes place, a regard had to their future as well as to their past guilt. The substitutionary merits which are reckoned to them, are vastly more than commensurate with both their prospective and their retrospective sinful-

ness. When, subsequent to justification, they are involved in the guilt of any new sin, the exhibition before God, in the course of the Redeemer's advocacy, of the sacrificial victim in consequence of whose immolation they have been accepted in the Beloved, is a continual memorial of their having passed from death unto life, proclaims them to be legally possessed of all the surpassing worth which it contains, and interposes 'the precious price' of their surety's blood between them and the effects of their moral poverty. In the justifying act, they were pronounced to be so strictly one with him, as henceforth to secure their being treated in the same manner as himself, and according to the extensive merits of his obedience. It is hence that ever after, there requires to be nothing more for shielding them from the consequences of any occasional sin, than the plea on their behalf of the righteousness which then became their's in law. The Saviour, identifying them as closely with himself as the head does the members of its body, appeals to his own character as a conclusive refutation of every charge of penal blameworthiness to which they may be exposed; and, ever living to make intercession for them, and remaining in the eternal possession of a situation which makes it impossible for him ever again to suffer, proves that no circumstances or events whatever can equitably surrender them to a judicial visitation. This he does, till the period when their earthly career is finished; and he then consummates the work of their personal holiness, and invests them with a moral life so perfect and confirmed that, in the possession of it, they can never again commit iniquity. While, therefore, the Father, reckoning to them a righteousness all-sufficient for covering both their past and future sins, and anticipating the continual forthcoming on their behalf of an intercessory agency by which every demand upon them will be answered, definitively, in

the act of justification, frees them from guilt; the Son, following up his anticipations, and performing the good work which this act begins, perpetually exhibits and pleads the worth of the sacrifice with which the justifying righteousness is incorporated, and continues, in virtue of this, to repel every accusation to which their delinquencies give rise, until he has completed their holiness and presented them spotless before God, 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.'*

It is not meant by this passage to be insinuated, that the people of God can do nothing faultworthy, or that they do not commit actions which afford reason for bringing a charge against them, and are in their own nature deserving of condemnation. It assumes, in fact, the very opposite, and tacitly affirms that they do much that is wrong, and much that, were it done by other men, would entail the curse of the law. By viewing them as only in the course of sanctification, it pronounces them to be still partially polluted; and, by speaking of a shield with which the missiles of accusation are warded off, it avers that, but for this, their moral character and acting are so vulnerable, as to expose them to arrows from the penal sanction of the law which might inflict a deadly wound. Yet while it thus concedes the fact of their being guilty of sinful acts, it declares the impossibility of their being brought by them under condemnation. Should an accuser, perceiving their iniquities, arise and arraign them; it tells him that they are justified men, and that the sentence of their rescue from wrath has been pronounced by the Deity himself. Should he object against the power

* Rom. viii. 33, 34.

of an act of acquittal which is past extending its influence to the future, and found upon the objection a renewal of his charge; it replies that their justification was the result of the piacular death of Christ, that the conclusiveness of his sacrifice in accomplishing the salvation of believers was testified by his resurrection from the dead, and that it embodies in it a vicarious worth which amply meets every past, present, and future demand. Should he aver a past expiation to be as powerless over a subsequent transgression, as a past justification is prospectively influential, and should he reason that, because there is no existing victim which can be immolated for their new iniquity, they must be personally subjected to the judgment it deserves; it finally declares to him that Christ is at the right hand of God making intercession for them, interposing between them and danger his perfect substitutionary righteousness, and, in the exhibition of it, demonstrating to the moral universe the grandeur and unanswerableness of the plea by which they are protected from punishment. With such a declaration as this, the mouth of every accuser is stopped, and the justified are pronounced to be men who, in spite of their occasional aberrations, will 'never be ashamed nor confounded world without end.'

It is hence that the faithful are assured by one apostle that if any of them sin, they have 'an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;'^{*} and that by another they are exhorted, from the consideration of their having a great High Priest who is passed into the heavens, and who is not such an one as cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, to 'come boldly to the throne of grace that they may obtain mercy as well as find grace in the time of need.'[†] If they were to say that they had

^{*} 1 John ii. 1.

[†] Heb. iv. 14-16.

no sin, that their salvation as persons accepted of God divests their deviations from rectitude of blameworthiness and of intrinsic obnoxiousness to a punitive award, they would deceive themselves, and prove that the truth is not in them ; yet if, along with a conviction of guiltiness in their actions, they remember the great intercessor whom they have within the veil, they need not to be alarmed, and require only to confess their sins in order to God's vindicating his faithfulness and equity, pledged in the justifying sentence he formerly pronounced upon them, in forgiving their sins, and in cleansing them from all unrighteousness.* The very fact of their walking with God concedes, on the one hand, their sinfulness, and, on the other, gives evidence of their perfect safety from its penal dominion. 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,'†—language assuredly which teaches no such wild and preposterous doctrine as that of a second justification, which gives no countenance whatever to the idea that every application of the Redeemer's blood to a believer is 'a purification of his conscience from dead works,' and which implies nothing of either a fresh removal of condemnation, or the possibility of subjection to it being repeated,—but language, nevertheless, which certainly does, by implication at least, declare that the people of God are often committing sins, and which, in addition to this, affirms that all the consequences of them are averted by the continual pleadings of that blood of sprinkling at whose beseeching voice God formerly pronounced them justified men. It is 'to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,' that 'the fountain for sin and for uncleanness' has been opened.‡ The seal was removed from it, and they

* 1 John i. 8, 9.

† Verse 7.

‡ Zech. xiii. 1.

were plunged beneath its waters, when, in the act of justification, they passed from death to life ; but 'in summer and in winter' does the river of it flow, and, stationed by the side of it, they ever after are washed by it from their guilt as it accumulates. In the act of their believing the gospel, the Saviour's sacrifice is first produced for them, and, in respect to the atonement, delivers them from the curse of the law ; and, while they remain in the world, it continues, in respect to the intercession, to be displayed on their behalf, 'cleanses them from all sin,' and renders it impossible that they can be affected, in a way of condemnation, by any of their iniquities. It is thus that, in his intercessory function, the Redeemer is a perpetual days-man betwixt God and his people, that he always interposes his sacrifice as the medium through which their persons and procedure are beheld, and that, in consequence of this, the Father 'sees no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel.'*

Such, then, is the way in which the intercession of Christ shelters his followers from every penal consequence of their sins committed after justification. Nor does this doctrine lead, in the remotest manner, to licentiousness, lessening the force of their motives to obedience, or teaching them to think lightly of their transgressions. It operates, in fact, in the very opposite direction. For, not only is the averting of all punishment from the offences of believers accompanied with the constant forthputting of an agency by which a work of sanctification is steadily and progressively carried forward ; but it is itself both an indispensable prerequisite to the perpetuity and effectiveness of this agency, and one of the instruments which it employs in the accomplishment of its designs. Without

* Numb. xxiii. 21.

it, as we have already seen, they would stand in need of a rapid series of new justifications, by each of which, the work of moral renovation would be thrown back to a fresh commencement; and without it, besides, they would be under such perpetual apprehensions of falling from grace, as would bring them under the influence of a terror by which love, the most powerful motive to obedience, would be destroyed. In the one respect, its absence would be fatal to the very existence of a sanctifying process; and, in the other, it would throw an insurmountable obstacle in the way of its success. It is the love of Christ which constrains a believer to live to God. 'Perfect love casteth out fear.' In order, therefore, to its operation, there must exist the very apparatus for repelling accusations and for damming up every source of terror, which we find in the protecting department of the Saviour's intercession.

In this view of the function, consequently, as well as in the other views of it which we have taken, its immediate work is to carry forward and perfect the moral renovation of the justified. While it secures them, on the one hand, against all the penal results of their occasional sins; it is, on the other, all the while plying every instrumentality for eradicating the indwelling corruption in which they have their origin. It asks and obtains for them the influences of the Spirit, by which their hearts are comforted, their souls purified, and their minds enlightened. It affords an incessant display of the love and pity of the Redeemer, of his constant remembrance of them in heaven, and of his affectionate care and interest in all their concerns; and by this, it stimulates their love and gratitude and other excitements to holy living, rouses them into action, and augments them in their power. It forms the medium through which prayer ascends to God,

mingles with it an incense which draws toward it his complacency, invests it with a moral energy by which it 'moves the hand that moves the universe,' and, in all this, suffuses round a believer and purifies that atmosphere of devotion which has been justly named 'the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air.' It secures and furnishes the blessings from God which the teaching and kingship of the mediator actually confer upon men; and, in this, it accomplishes, through the medium of the one office, their deliverance from doubts and prejudices and remaining ignorance, and effects, through the medium of the other, their rescue from the influence and onsets of all their enemies,—from principalities, from powers, from the rulers of the darkness of this world, and from wicked spirits in high places. In every possible and requisite manner, it establishes, strengthens, and settles them, and sanctifies them wholly in body, soul, and spirit. Thus it is that, since he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Christ saves his ransomed to the uttermost. 'Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding riches of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named not only in this world but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be

head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.'†

* Eph. i. 15—23.

† Col. iii. 1—4.

CHAP. V.

THE ORDER OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD.

Endless conjectures have been made respecting the reality or illusiveness of Melchizedek's humanity, the precise place which was the seat of his regal authority, and the import of the assertions that he was without father, without mother, without pedigree, and had neither beginning of days nor end of life. Many, unable to comprehend how such expressions can be applied to any of the human race, have supposed that he was either a created angel, the Holy Spirit, or our Lord himself; and others, aware of the insuperable objections which burden each of these opinions, have concluded that he was Shem, a king of Canaan descended from Ham, or a person of the posterity of Japheth.

Amidst such a latitude of interpretation, where shall we find data for arriving at the truth? It was never, we apprehend, intended by inspiration to be clearly ascertained; and the knowledge of it, instead of enlarging, would materially diminish our discovery of that order of priesthood to which Christ and this mysterious personage belong. The laconic, insulated, and altogether singular manner in which he is introduced to the sacred narrative, is itself strong presumptive proof that his personal char-

acter is intentionally concealed, that this concealment is necessary to a just exhibition of the peculiar nature of his sacerdotal office, and that all materials are withheld which might furnish any further knowledge of him than that which is communicated in his short narrative in the Book of Genesis. Had it been either indispensable or useful for us to see him beneath his official robes, and away from the scenes of his official acting, his history would have been given us in a more detailed form; and were the acquisition of a further acquaintanceship with his character unprejudicial to correct views of the order of his priesthood, every hint which might lead to the remotest conclusion respecting his origin or relationship, would not have been so studiously suppressed as it manifestly is. He is spoken of in a way which was obviously designed to hold us in ignorance of every event concerning him, but the solitary fact of his having met Abraham on his return from the slaughter of the kings, and of his having then ministered to him, and received a tenth of his spoils. Irrespective, therefore, of all the numerous and conflicting speculations regarding him which have been derived from fancy, conjecture, or forced criticism, it only becomes us to believe that a right understanding of this single fact, is sufficient to answer every purpose of inspiration in the introduction of his name.

While, however, we must thus regard ourselves as designedly shut out from all the information which might gratify an idle curiosity, and while we must content ourselves with knowing the isolated fact in Melchizedek's history to which we have referred; there are important reasons, connected with a proper view of his typical character, why we should believe that, from whatever branch of Noah's family he sprang, he was truly human, and that all those allegations are unfounded which represent him as a purely spiritual or supernatural being.

'Every High Priest,' says Paul, 'is taken from among men, and is ordained for men in things pertaining to God who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself is compassed with infirmity.*' It is here affirmed that manhood is indispensable in the person who discharges the duties of a priesthood for our race. An angel, therefore, or the divine Spirit, or even our Lord himself, who, notwithstanding his occasional assumption of an illusory humanity, did not become really human till his incarnation, could not have done those services which Melchizedek performed for Abraham. No purely spiritual being, whatever may be the appearances which he is capable of assuming, and however much mental perception he may have of the condition, frailties, and character of men, can be sympathizingly acquainted with the infirmities of our nature. In order to his being compassed with these, and possessed of such an experimental knowledge of them as will empower him to sooth down their asperity, destroy the source in which they originate, and elevate the subjects of them to a state of holy and unmingled enjoyment, he must himself become human, subject his person to their influence, and render himself 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' Hence it was that, before the Redeemer had power to 'succour those who are tried,' or possessed a capacity of being 'touched with the feeling of our infirmities,'—things which are inseparably connected with an efficient priesthood,—he required to come 'in the likeness of sinful flesh.' 'In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.†

* Heb. v. 1—3.

† Heb. ii. 17.

Now, if not even Christ himself could act as a priest until he became a 'partaker of flesh and blood,' it is preposterous to imagine that either he, or the divine Spirit, or a created angel, was the person who, in the days of Abraham, sustained the character of 'priest of the most High God.' This person, whoever he was, must, on account of any mere spirits' destitution of some necessary qualifications for the sacerdotal office, and in order to his having been a proper type of him who 'was made perfect through sufferings,' have been a man. This point, it is requisite to believe; and beyond this, it is presumptuous to enquire.

Let us feel satisfied, then, respecting Melchizedek's proper humanity, let us be persuaded that all enquiries regarding his origin or secular history are wholly foreign to the design of the Holy Spirit in mentioning his name, and let us remember that, in all the particulars of his recorded character, he was directly typical of Christ; and we are then fully prepared to understand the various features of that peculiar order which was held by him in common with our Lord. A knowledge of these will disclose all the points of difference which subsist between the character of this order and that of the Levitical, and afford a clear conception of the distinguishing and peculiar excellencies of the Redeemer as 'the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.' A minute portraiture of them is contained in a passage which professedly illustrates the subject, and which is expressly assumed as the groundwork of those discussions of it which occupy so large a part of the Epistle to the Hebrews. This, though, with the exception of the short historical notice in the Book of Genesis, the only one which can yield us information, is of itself amply sufficient to give a safe and satisfactory guidance to all our inquiries. 'Jesus is made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. For

this Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.*

Four things we conceive to be included in this passage which point out the peculiarities of Melchizedek's priestly order. These are its supremacy, the glory and dignity connected with the manner of its institution, its perfection and perpetuity, and its junction with a kingship of righteousness and peace. We shall consider them in succession.

I. Its Supremacy.

It is this feature of the priesthood which is referred to in the clause, 'To Melchizedek, Abraham gave a tenth of all.' The design for which God enjoined tithe-giving upon the Israelites, was evidently to draw from them a perpetual acknowledgement of their debtorship to his bounty for their existence, and for every addition which was made to their possessions. This requirement was known and complied with, and the reasonableness of it acknowledged, long before the legislation from Sinai. The likelihood is that it was made contemporaneously with the promulgation of the first command to offer sacrifices which were purely piacular. While Adam was enjoined to present animals for an expiation, he was, at the same time, commanded to offer the fruits of the earth

* Heb. vi. 20. and vii. 1—3.

for an expression of thanksgiving. We are not directly informed, indeed, respecting any such appointment; yet neither have we any express notice of the expiatory institution. The fact of the latter, we learn by induction; and the fact of the former, we are taught by the same kind of evidence. Abel, we are assured, while his father was still alive, brought an offering of the firstlings of the flock; and Cain, at the same period, made a presentation of the fruits of the ground. Neither of them, we may suppose, had immediate authority from God for acting as they did; but both found the warrant for their conduct in a divine communication which had previously been made to Adam. As the materials, therefore, of Cain's offering were those which ever after constituted tithes, we may safely conclude that the law of tithe-giving, as well as the command to immolate sacrificial victims, was promulgated to man from the beginning.

That such a law was recognized and acted on in the days of Jacob is indisputable; for 'he vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give a tenth unto thee.'* In uttering this language, the patriarch pointedly connected the bountiful agency of God in providence, with his own duty of rendering him supreme homage. He viewed the display of Jehovah's regards toward him as bringing along with it an obligation both to erect a standing altar for his worship, and to expend in his service a tithe of all the temporal gifts he should receive. The surrender of the tenth part of his property was as indis-

* Gen xxviii. 20—22.

pensable an act of expressed dependance upon divine benevolence for his being and possessions, as the overt worship which he designed to render at Bethel. From God alone he could receive the food and raiment and protection which he required; and for the reception of these he felt himself bound, unless he should withhold the homage which was due to him as the Supreme Ruler of the universe, to make a full and regular payment of his tithes. The feeling which thus pervaded his mind must have originated in the knowledge of some express intimation of the divine will; and it must have been experienced by every right-hearted man of preceding or subsequent generations to whom that intimation was known. It must, consequently, have been an acknowledged law, during the patriarchal as well as the antediluvian age, that the payment of tithes was a necessary part of the worship of God, and constituted a recognition of his sovereign supremacy in the government of the world.

That this was the object of tithe-giving under the Jewish economy, cannot admit of a moment's doubt. The obedience of the Israelites to the precepts which enjoined it is regarded, throughout the sacred books, as a test of the reality or destitution of their professed subjection to God, and is represented as indispensable to their 'rejoicing before the Lord,' to their 'learning to fear God always,' and to his 'blessing them in all the work of their hands.*' The practice of this obedience is exhibited, on the one hand, as a proof of their continual gratitude and devotedness; and the absence of it, on the other, is viewed as a rejection of his authority, and a forfeiture of their privileges as his people.

The materials, too, of which the commanded tenths were to consist, are uniformly denominated 'holy or de-

* Deut. xii. 18. and xiv. 23, 29.

voted to the Lord.' Every thing else, as well as they, was to be thankfully acknowledged as the gift of heaven,—every thing whatever was to be viewed as at the disposal of divine sovereignty; yet these were to be regarded as, in such a special way, God's consecrated property, that, without the most daring sacrilege, they could not be alienated from his service, and devoted to any purposes secular or domestic. 'All the tithe of the land whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord. And concerning the tithe of the herd or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.* 'Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation, Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house.†

But if all the tithe of the land was thus the Lord's, and if the withholding of it was the sin of sacrilege and a suspension of allegiance to God, in what manner was it to be paid? He is altogether a spiritual being, is wholly imperceptible to the bodily senses, and could not, in any tangible way, receive it from the hands of offerers. Just on account of his invisibility, however, and of those other attributes of his nature which render it impossible for our fallen race to worship him without some sensible medium, he instituted, under the former dispensation, an order of men who were to act as mediators between him and the people, to transfer to him their requests, to convey to them his blessings, and to receive, and, as the peculiar privilege of their sacred office, to consume those offerings which were presented to him as the commanded proof of the

* Lev. xxvii. 30—32. † Mal. iii. 8—10.

homage and thanksgiving of obedient worshippers. Whatever, in their sacerdotal capacity, was done to them, was regarded as directly done to himself. Every thing which was his consecrated possession, was given into their hands, and placed at their disposal. Commands, it is true, were issued to them for regulating their use of things which were sacred and devoted. With these, however, the people had no concern. They were enjoined to lay at the feet of the priests all the eucharistical offerings and tithes which were due to God as the author of their mercies; and, in this mode of devotement, they were taught to believe that they surrendered them immediately to himself. What he claimed as a gift of thanksgiving and acknowledgement religiously due to him, he transferred to his servants the Levites. They, hence, as the result of this transference, possessed a divine right to every kind of tithe which was enjoined in the law. A disrespect of them, therefore, in their official character, or an inattention, on the part of the people, to their unqualified claim to a tenth of all the productions of the land, constituted an abandonment of the Deity himself, and an open revolt from his government. 'Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation.*' 'And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them. Then contended I with the rulers and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil, unto the treasuries.†

In consequence of this peculiar situation of the priests, they were necessarily viewed by the people as persons who were eminently sacred. In their first appointment to their work, the exaltation to which, in reality, and in

* Numb. xviii. 21.

† Neh. xiii. 10—12.

the estimation of all, they were raised, originated a rebellious murmuring among the twelve tribes, and especially among the branches of Levi's family who were shut out from the office exclusively allotted to the sons of Aaron.* Such a result could not have accrued from it, unless, by universal consent, and from its intrinsic nature, it had been attended with the conferment of a peculiar dignity. The very fact of the priests having been expressly qualified and deputed to act for men in things pertaining to God, and of their having had a title, upon divine authority, to demand, as a privilege and prerogative of their order, those first fruits of the flock and the harvest, which were 'holy to the Lord;' made it plain that they were the superiors of their secular brethren, and equitably required their subjection to them in every affair of religion. Although, therefore, the other branches of Levi's posterity, and all the other tribes of the Israelitish nation, were, equally with them, the descendants of Abraham, and members of the chosen household which had been exalted above every kindred of the earth; yet, were they all compelled to regard themselves as the inferiors of the men who ministered in the sanctuary, and faithfully to pay them the tithes which betokened their consciousness of inferiority. 'And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.'†

We are to observe, however, that to the superiority which they enjoyed, there was a variety of important limitations. The number of them who were simultaneously in office was very great. Over one another they had no spiritual ascendancy. They were all equally entitled to the honors and immunities of the priesthood. While it

* Numb. xvi. 1—50.

† Heb. vii. 5.

conjointly became them to make a rigorous exaction of those offerings which, though they themselves became the possessors of them, were directly due to God; no individual among them had power to require any degree of subjection from his coadjutors, to exercise over them the rule of a superior control, or to appropriate to himself any more than the common portion of tithe which the prescriptions of the law equally divided among the community. There were different departments, indeed, of the Temple service to which they had to attend,—particular portions of the sacerdotal work which were distributed among officiates, and specifically apportioned to the various individuals; but these, with the exception of the high-priesthood, which empowered the person who held it to correct abuses among the common priests and to make atonement for their sins, neither implied the existence of any scale of subordination, nor argued the ascendancy of any one person or class above the rest. They were only the different functions of a co-operating and complex ritual, which were conjunctly discharged by a multitude standing upon a superficies of rank.

The exactions of the priests were hence made only upon those who were not invested with the sacerdotal character. Even the superiority which they held over them was limited to the period in which they were in office. Neither they nor the High Priest himself could demand a tithe before their investment with the priestly robes, or pretend to authority over either their contemporaries, survivors, or future generations. 'They truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death.* All their predecessors in being, as well as those who succeeded them, were persons with whom they had no official concern. They were, besides,

* Heb. vii. 23.

compelled to reckon themselves intrinsically inferior to Aaron, with whom their priesthood began, and to each of the patriarchs to whom God gave a special announcement or repetition of the covenant of peculiarity which he had made with their nation. Though any High Priests of the Aaronic order had lived contemporaneously with Abraham, and had possessed the consequent physical power of receiving tithes from him ; yet could they never have obtained them on account both of the patriarch's superiority to all his descendants, and of his having had specifically made to him the promise that 'in him and in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.*

But, 'consider,' says the apostle, 'how great Melchizedek was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.† His priesthood lay under no such restrictions. It was possessed of a supremacy which gave him unqualified authority to demand the tokens of subordination from a patriarch, the first father of the Jewish people, exalted, in their apprehension, above even the angels of heaven, and confessedly greater than any of the prophets or fathers of succeeding ages. He was not only the founder of that nation, who, by divine appointment, and by a moral and political constitution of heavenly origin, were erected, in their separation from the surrounding heathen, and throughout the whole period of their Old Testament history, into a typical emblem of the Church of Christ; but by way of eminence, he was himself 'the friend of God,' and 'the father of the faithful' of every country and generation. So great is he esteemed in the judgment of inspiration itself, that his 'spiritual children' is synonymous phraseology with 'the followers of the Redeemer;' and so great was he reckoned by the Jews, that, when our Lord insinuated his own superiority to him,

* Gen. xxii. 15—18.

† Heb. vii. 4.

they replied with astonishment, 'Art thou greater than our father Abraham? Whom makest thou thyself?'

* They had no conception of his inferiority to any one whom they supposed destitute of the attributes and prerogatives of supreme Godhead. That he was superior even to the angels themselves, they were fully persuaded. Yet with the exception of this idea, so exceedingly wild and untenable, no one perhaps will be disposed to call in question their general opinion of his character. All, on the contrary, will fully go along with them in viewing him as inferior to none under either the old dispensation or the new. If, therefore, in spontaneous acknowledgement of his own felt inferiority to him, this greatest among the ransomed family of God paid tithes to Melchizedek, and bowed down to receive from him his sacerdotal blessing, we can be at no loss to apprehend the force of the apostle's implied exclamation, 'How great was this priest!' For 'without all contradiction, the less is blessed by the greater.'

†

In his conduct toward Melchizedek, however, the patriarch acted not merely for himself, but also as the representative of his posterity. From the fact of his never having personally, but only in his descendants, entered upon the permanent habitation of Canaan, it is obvious that they as well as himself, were involved in the consequences of that procedure which led to the right of its possession, and that, in his receiving the promise of inhabiting it, he was regarded in law as their public head. This promise, as well as every other of a general nature which was given him, he received in consequence of God having sworn that he should be 'his God, and the God of his seed after him.'

† When he had, by the reception of it, been divinely constituted their organ, he could no longer,

* John viii. 53.

† Heb. vii. 7.

* Gen. xvii. 5—8.

in any part of his public procedure, and above all, in those actions of his life in which, either with or without a medium, he had covenant intercourse with Jehovah, divest himself of his representative responsibility. In his payment of tithes, therefore, to the King of Salem,—an action in which he had no other concern with the individual than as ‘the priest of the Most High God,’ all his posterity must have made an implied and conclusive confession of their subordination to Melchizedek. From this, there could not, in the very nature of the case, have been any possible exemption. All of them, without the remotest respect to the high, authoritative, and sacred situations which some of them should fill, and notwithstanding the lofty and spiritual rule and ascendancy to which they should be raised, were indiscriminately, in Abraham’s act, laid at the feet of the priest of Salem. Aaron himself, consequently, and all the long line of Levitical priests and High Priests who, in the respective periods of their official authority, were appointed to act for God amongst their brethren and to receive tithes from them in proof of their subjection, acknowledged him their spiritual superior. ‘And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham; for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.’*

What more then, in addition to all this, could be wanting either to shew Melchizedek’s aggrandizement, or to prove the supremacy of his priesthood? The father of the faithful, he whom Jews and believing Gentiles esteem the greatest of the redeemed, and, along with him, all his natural and spiritual posterity, as well as a divinely commissioned race of priests, rendered him subjection,—and rendered it while they viewed him solely in his official capacity. His greatness consisted not in the peerlessness of mental

* Heb. vii. 9, 10.

talent, in the splendid grandeur of regal majesty, or in a distinguished height of federal representation, but simply in his sacerdotal supremacy. It was to his spiritual greatness, and to it alone, that Abraham, the Levitical priesthood, and all the Israelitish people rendered the tokens of deferential veneration.

Let it be remembered, however, that, in this supremacy of priesthood, Melchizedek was merely the type of another priest who should arise after his order. The greatness and glory of it were but prefigurative in him. They possessed a literal existence, and acquired their full significance, only in 'the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.' All the submission to his authority and implicit recognition of his sacerdotal ascendancy which were made by the patriarch for himself, the Levites, and the entire multitude of his offspring, were only a typical emblem of that thorough subordination to our Lord, as the supreme and only efficient High Priest for men, which carries with it a total abrogation of the ceremonial part of the Mosaic institutes, a denouncement of all the services of Old Testament priests as things which are 'weak and unprofitable,' an acknowledgement of him as 'the only mediator between God and man,' a recognition of his sacrifice as the exclusive source of expiation, and an investment of him with the office and all the prerogatives of single-handed priesthood. During the dispensation which was introductory to the actual assumption of his messiahship, there were many priests 'ordained for men in things pertaining to God,' and acknowledged as the spiritual leaders of the people. Their numbers, on account of both their mortality and their mental finitude, the one narrowly circumscribing the period of their services, and the other requiring a multitude of officiates for the thousands of worshippers, were exceedingly great; their order and authority, originating

as they did in the express appointment of heaven, rested on the firmest basis, and bore the impress of a divine sanction; and the performances which they executed, entitled them, in consequence both of their intrinsic nature, and of their symbolic bearing upon the work of the Redeemer, to the veneration, confidence, and subordination of the people. When Christ, however, had made his appearance in the world, become the surety of a better covenant, and fulfilled, by his obedience to the death, the import of all the Levitical prefigurations, they were taught that a greater than they had arisen to whom they themselves had paid tithes in Abraham, that, in his sacerdotal consecration, an overthrow was effected of their entire constitution, order, and authority, and that he should henceforth be regarded and submitted to as a priest who has neither predecessor, superior, subordinate, associate, nor successor in the work of acting 'for men in things pertaining to God.'

The subjection to Christ which was typified by Abraham's payment of tithes to Melchizedek, we must view as not only an acknowledgement of his sacerdotal supremacy, but as likewise the expression of a confidence and veneration altogether spiritual in their nature. That the Jewish ordinances, while carnal in their matter, were wholly spiritual in their import, is a general principle for which most are ready to contend, and one which is most distinctly stated in the scriptures. 'They were shadows of good things to come; but the body is of Christ.*'

Now, when we follow this principle through its various ramifications, and by the light of it, examine the different departments of which the Mosaic institution was composed, we must perceive that, in precisely the same way that the

* Col. ii. 17.

sacrifices and ablutions were shadows of the Redeemer's expiation, the services of the priests must have prefigured his sacerdotal actings, their reception of tithes must have symbolized his receiving the first fruits of his people's spiritual increase, and the Israelitish nation must have been the type of Abraham's spiritual posterity, or of 'the general Assembly and Church of the first-born.' Nothing can be more inconsistent and capricious than to admit a general truth, as all confess the doctrine of spirituality in the rites of the old economy to be, and then, on account of its interference with some doctrines of a preconceived creed, to set it aside, and, in all the particulars where such an interference is the result of its application, to supplant it with its opposite. Yet it is the sin of this procedure which has been committed by those who have maintained the spirituality of all the laws respecting the priests but those which related to their privileges, and who have argued for the typicality of sacrifices, while, with the same breath, they have denounced that of the people for whom they were made. Inconsistency has led them to reject the truth of Israel having been a typical people, and of tithe-giving having been a service of spiritual import, all the while that they have contended for the entire spirituality of collateral and similar parts of the Jewish institutions. To a sober mind, however, it must be plain, that what we admit as a whole, we are compelled to admit in its component parts,—that what is true of a genus must be true of any one of its constituent species,—and that, in virtue of the general and admitted principle to which we have referred, we are hence called upon, both to view the Israelitish people as typical of the Church of Christ, and to regard the payment of tithes, in addition to its primary object of acknowledging the beneficent administration of God in providence, as having been a symbol of the spiritual homage and subjection

which are rendered by believers to their great High Priest.

When we enquire, then, for the entire amount of prefigurative meaning which was embodied in the transaction between Melchizedek and the father of the faithful, we are taught not only that Christ is the Supreme and only Priest of the Most High God, but that, in this character, submission is made to him and dependence placed upon him by all the faithful of every generation,—that, in drawing near to God, they utterly reject every conjoint ground or medium of approach,—that singly from him they receive the blessings which are conferred upon them as holders of the promises,—and that, as the fruit of their subordination, they ‘present their bodies to him a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is their reasonable service.’* ‘Thy people shall be a free-will offering in the day of thy power. Thy progeny, in the glorious sanctuary, shall be more than the dew in the womb of the morning. For Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.’†

We have thus shewn that one peculiarity in Melchizedek's sacerdotal order is its supremacy. Another, inferred like the former, from the statement in the epistle to the Hebrews, is

II. *The Special Glory and Dignity which resulted from the Manner of its Institution.*

This is tacitly expressed in the epithet which is employed as descriptive of his office: ‘The priest of the Most High God.’ This name we are to regard as teaching something more than the fact that, in his official ca-

* Rom. xii. 1.

† Ps. cx. 3, 4.

capacity, the true God was immediately the object of his ministrations. In addition to this, it intimates the nature of that divine call on which the validity of his priestly character rested, the manner in which this call was given him, the degree of God's approbation and complacency which it expressed, and the consequent dignity and glory which it conveyed. While every priest of the Aaronic order is mentioned as only one amongst many and is usually described by the common and every-day duties of his office, Melchizedek is regarded as 'priest' by way of eminence, and is spoken of as officiating to the Divine Being in his most august of characters, 'the Most High God.' A surmise is hence created that there were things in the original constitution of his order which raised him to a peerless elevation, that, in standing on it, he was borne up by a divine warrant, and that the call in which this warrant was contained was of a nature signally aggrandizing. Neither he nor Christ, who was of the same order, and who must have had the same species of official investiture, 'glorified himself to be made an High Priest; for no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.*'

All the ordinary and pontifical priests under the Mosaic economy were invested with the sacerdotal authority in virtue of their mere tribeship, of their descent from Aaron, and of their freedom from those corporeal and other blemishes which were regarded as disqualifications by the ceremonial law. The official dignity of any individual was held by him in common with all his predecessors, co-adjutors, and successors in office, and was derived entirely from the progenitorship of Aaron and the exclusive confinement of the priesthood to his posterity. Mere descent from him, the prescribed portion of legal qualifi-

* Heb. v. 5, 4.

cation, and the enjoined process of ceremonial consecration, were the only source in which the prerogatives and sacred superiority of the Levites had their origin. Hence was their investment with the sacerdotal robes entirely unaccompanied either with an immediate call from the Deity, or with the distinguished honor which this would necessarily have conferred.

It was different, however, with the individual in whose person their order took its rise. The office of priesthood, from its very nature, has a close concern with the Divine Being. Its duties have an exclusive respect to transactions for men in things pertaining to God. It embodies a work of express mediation between the Deity and his creatures. No man, therefore, can take the honor of it to himself. The institution of it in the case either of any detached individual or of a succession of persons during any limited period, is the result of a direct and voluntary act of Jehovah,—an act which both institutes the office, and imparts the requisite authority to the occupant. Aaron, consequently, who was without predecessors, and before whom there was neither overt nor written revelation from God which either intimated the fact of a standing priesthood, or, though it had, could afford him as an individual any warrant for the discharge of its functions, was separated from his secular brethren, and invested with the pontifical character by a divine announcement which had this separation and investment for its specific object. ‘And take unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons.’* Without this commission, his assumption of the office would have been unmingled ruin and disgrace ; but with

* Exod. xxviii. 1.

it, an emanation of glory streamed forth from heaven upon his head, and from him diverged away over all his official posterity. By divine command, he ascended the lofty elevation assigned to him; he was raised to the office of a typical mediation by a sovereign appointment of the Lord of glory; and, to a superficial observer, he may hence appear to have been the most favored and dignified of men.

Still, however, though the pontifical honor of Aaron was confessedly great, it is plain, that, in several important particulars, the call which conferred it was decidedly inferior to that of Melchizedek.

The words of it were not addressed by God directly to himself, but through the medium of his brother. In the reception of it, he occupied similar ground to that of the Israelitish people when they received the legislation from Sinai. All the precepts and appended promises of the covenant which was made with them were, in form and structure, addressed to themselves; yet, as to the actual enunciation of them, they were primarily given to Moses, and, in their delivery, came to them only through his mediation. During the period of his remaining on the Mount and of his immediate intercourse there with Jehovah, they continued under covering of the dense clouds with which Sinai was enveloped, ignorant all the while of the events which were transpiring at its summit, unfavored with a solitary perception of the direct symbol of the divine presence, and unblest by the utterance to them of a single syllable from the mouth of the Deity. Hence, notwithstanding the intimate concern which they had in the law which was then being legislated, they were placed in such a situation when receiving it as altogether depressed them beneath that elevation on which they would have stood, had they all, like Moses, been permitted to 'speak face to face with God.' By the

isolated fact of their having been selected as the nation to whom was addressed and into whose custody was committed the Sinaitic communication, they were doubtless an ennobled people. Yet this was the mere twilight of honor; and the meridian blaze of it was denied them by the necessity which was imposed of their receiving every thing through the hands of a mediator.

The case was the same with Aaron. A call to the priesthood was given him, which carried along with it an influence highly aggrandizing; but it was communicated to him through an internunciate, and was stript, in the transference, of half its accompanying glory. While the appointment was intrinsically valid, another had the honor of receiving it from the hand of its divine author. He himself witnessed all the thundering, earthquake, and terror of the act of communication; but he was denied the remotest share in its immediate blessedness and dignifying tendency. A message was sent him from the King; but he was never honored with a personal interview.

It was, however, altogether different with Melchizedek. It is true that, with the exception of what is implied in the epithet which is given him, we have no direct evidence in the word of God either in support or in refutation of this averment. But, when we remember that his order and that of Christ are identical and mutually illustrative, we are warranted, from the admitted fact that there was no internunciation in the call of the Redeemer, to infer the equal want of it in his. There is, besides, a sufficiency of conjectural proof to bear down every objection, in what we know of the peculiar circumstances of his history, in the absence of every contemporary who was a known and accredited messenger of the divine will, and in the emphasis with which he is denominated 'the Priest of the Most High God.' Abraham was the only

contemporaneous individual who received divine oracles ; yet, from the known events of their history, and from the distant locality of their respective places of abode, it seems evident that he never saw the King of Salem till after his susception of the sacerdotal character. The validity of Paul's reasoning on another of Melchizedek's distinguishing official features,—his being without beginning of days or end of life,—would, were we even destitute of all other proof, make this assumption indispensable. These reasonings would be pointless if Abraham had seen him at a time when his pontificate had been laid aside ; they would be equally pointless if he had seen him before it was assumed ; they would be pointless in every way if he had ever seen him at all but as 'the Priest of the Most High God.' If, therefore, he was never known to the patriarch but in the possession of his priestly character, if Abraham was the only person of that age who received direct communications from Jehovah, and if not even he was ever known to act as a mediator, or to be possessed of a commission to declare authoritatively to others the divine will ; the inference is irresistible, that Melchizedek received his call through the medium of no internunciate, but by a direct communication from God. He was, consequently, exalted to an honor of which Aaron was altogether destitute. He both received a commission from the King, and, in the reception of it, was ennobled by a personal interview.

Again : The call of Aaron was shared by him in the glory of it, with his co-adjutors and successors in office. It had no exclusive respect to himself, but embraced 'his sons with him, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.' In the object of it, it was, in fact, generically different from the call of Melchizedek. The one was the institution of a succession of priests ; and the other was the appointment of a solitary individual. The one had respect

to a multitude ; and the other was solely concerned with an insulated man. The one,—and that too the call whose glory was vastly the least considerable,—divided its comparatively meagre assemblage of honors into units, and parsimoniously distributed them among its multitude of subjects ; and the other, whose rays and emanations of aggrandizement were the most luminous and splendid, converged them all in a single focus, and poured them undividedly down upon the head of a person detached from all before him, around him, or after him.

In the call of Aaron, it is true, there was an especial excellence when he stood compared with the priests and the high-priests who succeeded him. To him it was primarily, in its constitutive efficacy, addressed ; he was first in the line of those ' many priests ' whom it invested with sacerdotal prerogatives ; it was in his person that their order had its constitution and origin ; and, on all these grounds, he was raised above them in his official elevation. These very considerations, however, shew that, in his designation to the priesthood, there hung upon him a long course of successors who, as well as himself, were affected by his call, that, but for them and the successive nature of his order, he would never have received it, and that, notwithstanding his first participation in the honor which it conferred, all his official glory was shorn into as many items as there were individuals in his officiating offspring, and, with the exception of his personal moiety, was declared to belong not to him but to others. It is hence rendered still more manifest that, in the dignity of his office, he was immeasurably inferior to Melchizedek who stood single-handed in his appointment, who received a call which had not the remotest reference to any other, who had conferred upon him an honor in which none else could participate, and who was therefore the first and the last and the only object of the dignifying

communication which constituted him 'the Priest of the Most High God.'

Further: Aaron was installed to his office by the ministry of Moses, and was ceremonially qualified for it by a variety of ritual observances. He had offerings of various descriptions made for him; he was consecrated by unction with literal oil; a mitre was placed upon his head; and he was arrayed in an ephod, a girdle, a robe, and a breastplate. All this was done for him through the ministration of his brother, as wholly indispensable to his assumption of the pontificate. External pomp was necessary to impart to him such an august and portly greatness in the eyes of the people as could not have resulted from the intrinsic weight and solidity of his character. The possession of such a greatness was requisite for securing the degree of popular respect and submission which were necessary for the right performance of his pontifical duties; and the creation of it was obviously, in addition to their typical qualities, a grand and leading design of those imposing ceremonies by which he was installed to the priesthood. The essential reality of it, however, was rendered exceedingly small and the value of it vastly deteriorated, by the impossibility of its being supported without the propping up of such carnal auxiliaries. An artificial and puny light is greatly heightened in its effect by the costliness and the lustre of a magnificent chandelier, and the rays which it emits are brought with a double welcome to the eye by the princely drapery and ornamenting of the apartment in which it is placed; but the blaze and the brilliance of the solar luminary do not and cannot admit of enhancement, and always burst forth most overpoweringly when they irradiate themselves in their own unborrowed and unaided glory. The one has been lighted up by the immediate hand of the Creator, and, from the inherent plenitude of its resources, shines forth without

either a parallel or the possibility of conferred irradiation: the other, while the matter of it is from the creating hand of God, has received its structure and position from the intermediate agency of man, and is not only capable of being surrounded with objects which will improve and heighten the influence of its shining, but directly requires them to give it a properly imposing effect upon spectators. Now, as the one of these exceeds the other in glory, so does the priesthood of Melchizedek excel the priesthood of Aaron. The one, while in the warrant for its institution expressly divine, was erected through the instrumentality of a man, and, in its influence upon the people, was borne out with the helping hand of outward and pompons decorations; but the other, in both its matter and its erection, was, without intermediate agency, directly the work of God, fully maintained itself by its own intrinsic excellencies, and needed not the remotest aid from external ennoblement. In consequence of the peculiar dignity of his sacerdotal order, the King of Salem was too great either to be introduced to it by any human ministration, or to be carried forward to the enjoyment of its prerogatives by any literal consecration. He was both constituted a priest and qualified for the priestly office, in an altogether spiritual way, and by the immediate agency of Jehovah. In regard, consequently, to his instalment, as well as to the manner of his call and the exclusive bearing which it had upon himself, it is obvious that there is a special dignity and glory in his order.

In the three particulars, then, which we have specified,—in the reception of his call through the medium of another, in its having referred to others besides himself and constituted a succession of priests, and in his having been inaugurated with a parade of ceremonies and by the hand of a mediator,—lies, we conceive, the great inferiority of that dignity which resulted to Aaron from the

manner and the nature of his official consecration. In the contrast, on the other hand, which we find to all of them in the call given to Melchizedek, consists the channel through which his supereminent glory was conveyed.

All this glory, however, we are to regard as merely typical of that which was sustained by the Redeemer. For each of its distinguishing features, we are to seek in the person of Christ; and, because the antitype always excels that which prefigured it, we are to expect that in him they are to be found in still greater clearness and magnitude. Like Melchizedek, he was, in each of the distinguishing features of the institution of their order, elevated to an immeasurable height above the first High Priest of the Tabernacle. While, however, his type was but the shadow, he himself was the substance. He hence inherently possessed all the overpowering sacerdotal glory which the honors of the other existed only to adumbrate. 'He glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.'*

A real and explicit call was given him by God the Father to the office on which he entered; and it was addressed to him in such a way as was incompatible with the employment of any internunciate. In those everlasting purposes of the Deity which he purposed in himself before the world began, in which all his works and all the ways of his creatures were clearly foreseen, and in which the whole scheme of human redemption was formed and decreed,—in these eternal purposes, was the Redeemer decretively set apart to the great work which he should, in the fulness of time, accomplish. At the arrival of the period when his actual ministrations were appointed to com-

* Heb. v. 5.

mence, angelic messengers from God rejoiced around him as an acknowledged priest. He was then recognized as the elect of the Father in whom his soul delighted, as already sustaining the character and about to perform the work of the Saviour of the world, and as the promised consolation of Israel who had been officially consecrated to save his people from their sins.

The call, moreover, which had been given him, and the glory in which the giving of it had arrayed him, had an exclusive concern with himself. '*Thou art my Son,*' and '*thou art a priest,*' was the language in which it was expressed. So pointedly did it respect him as a detached and solitary individual, that the dignity of it neither is nor can be shared by any other.

His inauguration, besides, was accomplished by the immediate hand of the Father, and without any accompaniment whatever of external consecration. He was '*the Christ*,'—the anointed; but his unction was purely spiritual, and consisted in the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon him without measure. He is clothed with sacerdotal vestments; but they are too splendid in their nature, to be carnal in their materials. By their own intrinsic majesty, and by the excess of reverential and adoring feeling which they inspire, they are fitted to make men '*fall at his feet as dead.*' '*Righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.*'* '*He is clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle; his head and his hairs are white like wool, as white as snow; his eyes are as a flame of fire; his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.*'† '*He was made a priest, not after the law of a*

* Isa. xi. 5.

† Rev. i. 13—15.

carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.*

It is to all this, we apprehend, that the apostle refers, and it is the doctrine of it which he teaches, when he says, 'And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest; (for those priests were made without an oath, but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord swear and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek) by so much was Jesus made the surety of a better covenant.†

An oath with God is altogether different in the substance of it, from an oath with men. The design and the results of it are the same; but the matter and the form of it are necessarily of another description. Men, in order to the validity of their oaths, must swear by a greater than themselves, call on him to witness and record their engagements, and acknowledge his authority to require the fulfilment or to punish the neglect of them; but, because God can swear by none superior, he swears by himself, and, in the necessary absence of every higher security, gives the pledge of his own veracity for the accomplishment of what he engages to perform. An oath with him must hence, in the form of it, be only a special way of stating or declaring his will; and, in its intrinsic nature, it must consist of nothing else than the eternal and unchangeable purpose of his mind.

Some of his declarations, though true in all their extent at their first being made, are subsequently modified and sometimes overthrown. Promises of this kind are intended by him, at the making of them, to be only of limited duration. When the appointed period of their existence and stability has expired, and when, by diverging away from them, he alters his course of procedure

* Heb. vii. 16.

† Heb. vii. 20—22.

toward the individuals to whom they were given, he is said, in the language of accommodation, 'to repent.' In every case, on the other hand, in which he interposes with an oath, or in which he accompanies the promise with an appended declaration that it rests on a permanent and immutable purpose, no modification or subversion can possibly affect it. It is hence that his swearing respecting the priesthood of Christ, is immediately explained by the assurance that 'he will not repent,' or that the whole course of his acting toward him goes upon the assumption and recognition of the pledge he has given. The oath itself, therefore, is substantially the same thing as the divine decree, and, in its distinguishment from it, solely respects the manner in which it is expressed.

Paul, it is true, speaks of them as 'two immutable things,' and hence, as a cursory glance at the subject might lead us to suppose, as things which are distinct and separate. While, however, they are twofold and distinguishable in the manner of their declaration, and while a simple purpose formed in eternity which respects a merely limited and undefined dispensation, is an altogether different thing from a decree which is made known by a special mode of revelation, has an assurance appended to it that the Lord has sworn to its firmness, and is wholly insubvertible and exactly delineated; it is not inconsistent with the apostle's expression to regard the things which are two in the manner of their announcement, as strictly one in their pristine and essential nature. A purpose may either be attended, or it may not, with a declaration that 'the Lord will not repent.' It may, in other words, either be accompanied, or it may not, with an oath. It is thus that an oath and a purpose are distinguished. Yet what, after all, is the distinction but one which entirely concerns the mode in which the purpose is revealed? and what is the substance of the assurance in which, on the

part of the oath, the distinction consists, but just the purpose to the declaration of which it is annexed? God has made and announced a decree. All his attributes are engaged to fulfil it. The most solemn oath, essentially considered, could not afford a surer pledge for its fulfilment. Yet, in order to give it the most solid appearance which it is capable of assuming, an oath is interposed, or a repetition of it in a peculiar phraseology is made, as a concomitant of its announcement. The declaration, in other language, is sworn instead of being merely spoken. Instead of being uttered as a simple testimony, it is expressed in the form of an asseveration. Without an appended assurance, the purpose has the nature of a promise; but with it, it has the nature of an oath. The simple promise is a direct expression of the purpose, and the annexed assurance is only the exhibition of it in an additional and more splendid aspect. The oath and the counsel, therefore, while distinct and twofold in the manner of announcement, are strictly one in the ground on which they rest, and in the materials of which they are composed.

It was by the utterance, then, of an eternal purpose in the form of an oath that Christ was called to be a priest. The Levites, on the other hand, were appointed and consecrated merely by the law of a carnal commandment. A divine call was given to the first of them; but it was conveyed to him through a mediator, and was unaccompanied with any asseveration. He and his successors 'were made without an oath; but Christ with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' From the essential identity of it with the everlasting decree which concerned him, from the impossibility of its having been sworn to him through the medium of another, and from the consequent absence in the

transaction of every being but the Deity, it must, both virtually in the formation of the purpose, and actually in his assumption of the pontificate, have been uttered immediately and exclusively to himself; from the detached and individual way in which it is affirmed to have been made to him, and from the implied averment that no other priest whatever was called or consecrated either by it or by any other oath, it could have had no actual or implied reference to any subordinate, associate, or successor in the office; and from its having embodied not only the warrant for his suception of the priesthood, but also the acts of constitution and inauguration, it could not have consecrated him by any outward ceremonies, nor have raised him in the estimation of worshippers by a meretricious or carnally aggrandizing investment. The fact, therefore, of his having been officially constituted with an oath, of his having had a call and an installment with that which is altogether spiritual in its nature, which must, on account of its substantial identity with a divine decree, have been spoken in eternity, and which carried with it all the authority and indescribable majesty of a divine asseveration,—this fact is sufficient proof that, in all the characteristic features of the institution of the Aaronic priesthood, his own, like that of Melchizedek, differed from it in its nature, and inconceivably outpeered it in dignity and glory. ‘Inasmuch, consequently, as not without an oath he was made priest; by so much was Jesus made the surety of a better covenant.’

III. *Perpetuity and Perfection.*

The third peculiarity of the sacerdotal order of Melchizedek is its perpetuity and perfection. This is affirmed of it in the leading statement of the apostle: ‘Melchizedek

dek, who was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.'

It has already been argued that the King of Salem must have been and actually was a man. This fact must be assumed in order to our perceiving how he was, in any respect, a type of Christ; and it is supported both by the inspired averment that '*every* High Priest is taken from among men,' and by the connexion which exists between a priesthood and those necessary qualifications for it which are inseparable from manhood. The statement that he 'was without father and without mother' we must hence understand in a different sense from that which it conveys to an English ear. No man, since Adam, has sprung into existence in any way but by real generation. Such are the established laws of God, that, without it, there cannot be a single addition to our species. Had there ever existed amongst us, and mingled with human society, a being who, in the literal sense of the phraseology, was 'without mother,' he would, notwithstanding any corporality or other assimilation to us which he might have possessed, have, in reality, belonged to another and a different order of creatures. Being 'born of a woman' is, in all cases, essential to proper manhood. In the strict and usual acceptation of the terms, therefore, Melchizedek must have had both parents and ancestors.

Paul, it is to be remembered, does not speak of him as a man, but as a priest. He describes him, not historically, but officially. He compares him, neither with our species as such, nor with any other order of beings, but only with the priests and high-priests of the Jews. Neither he nor Moses says a syllable respecting him as a member of civil society, nor narrates a single secular transaction of his life. Both, on the contrary, rigidly

confine themselves to an exhibition of his character as 'the Priest of the Most High God.' Every thing which they affirm of him is to be regarded as true merely of his priesthood. It is essentially to this, and not properly to himself, that their descriptions refer. Even the comparison between him and the Levites would not have been made, had not both parties been viewed as holders of the sacerdotal office. To have described his personal nature, narrated unofficial events of his life, or spoken of him in any way but as the possessor of a peculiar kind of pontifical prerogatives, would have been utterly foreign to every object which the apostle has in view throughout the whole of his discussion. His aim is to evince the vast superiority of Melchizedek's order of priesthood to Aaron's, to elicit the weakness, inutility, and abolition of the latter, to prove the grandeur, effectiveness, and permanency of the former, and to establish his positions by a comparison of the corresponding features of the respective orders. He hence compares not so much the officiates as the offices. Though he formally speaks chiefly of the former, he does so merely because the office cannot be understood abstractly from the person, qualities, and performances of the officiate. Every thing, therefore, which he states is to be sought for, not in the person or properties of the man, but in the peculiarities and special order of the priest.

The apostle's language, then, is conventional, and borrows its terms from the technical phraseology of the ritual. If this general principle be forgotten, the whole of his statements are entirely unintelligible; but if it be borne in mind and applied to the various parts of his description, there remains no difficulty whatever in perceiving that, while Melchizedek had a proper ancestry and birth, he was yet 'without father and without mother.'

In the technical style which universal custom sanctioned

among the ancients, this was affirmed of every priest and king whose parents were either doubtful, unknown, or unrecorded in a public or official register. Many examples of this are to be found in those writings of theirs,—some of them nearly contemporary with the epistle to the Hebrews,—which have been preserved. In one of his tragedies, Euripides represents Ion, whose parents were Apollo and Creusa,—a fact of which he himself was ignorant,—as declaring, ‘As I am *without mother, and without father*, I attend the Temple of Apollo who nourished me.’* In another of his writings, he introduces Elector as saying, ‘If thou shouldst die, what will become of me? How can I be preserved who am *without brother, without father, and without friend*? If it so appear to thee, what must be done for me?’† ‘When he arrived at this portion,’ writes a Latin author, ‘he remarked that these were two Roman kings, the one of whom was *without father*, and the other *without mother*; for it was doubtful who the mother of Servius was, and, as to Ancus, he had no father, though he was said to be the grandson of Numa.’‡ Livy, another Latin writer, reports Canuleius to have asked, in a speech before the Roman Senate, ‘Did not Tullius, who was born of a Captive, who was *without father*, and whose mother was a slave, did not he rule with judgment and probity?’§ Horace, in the same way,—and this is the last quotation we shall make,—says, when addressing himself to Mæcenæ, ‘Thou justly persuadest thyself that, before the dominion of Tullius and the reign of one born a slave, there were many men who, though they were *without ancestors*, lived as men of worth, and were distinguished by the greatest honors.’||

* Eurip. Ion 109. † Eurip. Orest. 304. ‡ Plato Euthyd. Senec. Epist. cviii. § Livy iv. 3. || Hor. Sat. Lib. i. Sat. vi. 12.

In these quotations, as well as in many others which might be made from the Greek and Roman authors, persons in the regal and sacerdotal offices are spoken of as fatherless and motherless merely because their parentage was unknown to themselves, doubtful to others, or unrecorded in a genealogical table. Even when the individual's ancestry could be traced by oral testimony, and when his parentage itself was matter of probable conjecture or even of absolute certainty, yet if he himself or others could not produce an authentic attestation of it from regular and authenticated archives, he was affirmed, in his official capacity, to be parentless. Doubt, upon this point, was always regarded as inseparable from the absence of documental proof. On account of the lofty conspicuousness of their situation and of the highly important and responsible place which they held in society, kings and priests were always expected to possess a power of shewing their pedigree and parentage in the public records of the nation. When revolutions in the regal or sacerdotal government occurred, when any extraordinary events conspired to introduce a different order of succession, or when, in any other way, they were bereft of their written genealogies, or divested of a power to produce them, they were uniformly, notwithstanding any oral evidence which could have been produced to the contrary, viewed as being thenceforth 'without father and without mother.' Their being parentless was hence, in this current and peculiar sense of the phraseology, synonymous with their being destitute of a recorded genealogy. We thus perceive not merely the legitimacy and force of the language as applied to Melchizedek, but also the propriety with which the apostle immediately explains it by adding that he was 'without descent.'

The word * which our translators have rendered in this

* αγενελογητος.

manner does not mean that the individual whom it designates is literally without ancestry, but merely that his descent is not recorded in a regular genealogical table. The genealogy of a man, in the sense of this word, is not his actual pedigree, but the document which records it. When, therefore, the want of such a genealogy is affirmed of Melchizedek as a priest, not only is there no denial of his having had a literal ancestry, but there is nothing which either even affirms or denies his having had a documental pedigree either as King of Salem, or as a member of the household to which he belonged. While, in these capacities, he either may or he may not have possessed it, either supposition leaves the truth of his wanting it as a priest wholly unaffected. Hence, when, in a subsequent delineation of the same feature of his character, the apostle says that 'his descent is not recorded,' or that 'he is not genealogized among the sons of Levi,' he is totally silent regarding his genealogy as a king, and neither affirms nor denies his having either wanted or possessed it. Neither alternative he viewed as, in the slightest, affecting his argument, nor as a thing with which it had either remote or immediate concern. As a king or as a common member of society, Melchizedek either may or may not have been able to produce a written statement of his lineal descent; and, either in the one case or in the other, he was manifestly, as a priest, or in the only capacity in which he is spoken of in the scriptures, 'without genealogy.' There may have been kings of Salem before him from whom he regularly sprung, and his seminal connexion with them may have been recorded in every palace, temple, and habitation of the land; yet because he did not derive from them his sacerdotal prerogatives, because, in his pontifical authority, he stood unconnected with any either before him or after him, and because his name was unrecorded in the archives of

any sanctuary whatever, he was, when regarded simply as a priest, 'without descent,' and therefore, in the technical language of the ancients, 'without father, and without mother.'

Among the Levites, the silence or the ambiguity of the inspired record on the subject of any one's descent from Aaron, was fatal to his sacerdotal character, and inseparably disqualified him from performing a single duty of the priestly office. The documents in which their pedigree was registered were kept with the utmost vigilance and care; and they contained the only testimony which could be of service in establishing a claim to the honors of the altar. If no explicit attestation were furnished by them to an individual's membership of the Aaronic family, it mattered not how much or how conclusive proof, either oral or written, he could fetch from other quarters,—he was imperatively excluded from the service of the sanctuary, and expelled from the community of the Levites. * And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God.* † And of the priests, the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite to wife, these sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.†

The existence of such a law makes it plain that Melchizedek could never have been a priest of their order; it discovers the point of the argument, 'he whose descent

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 18. † Neh. vii. 63, 64. Ezra ii. 61, 62.

is not registered among them received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises ;* it shew the necessity of proving that he was 'without genealogy' in order to establish Paul's position respecting his priesthood ; and it evinces the cogency with which this fact argues the single-handedness and perpetuity of his order. Had his official character, like that of the Aaronites, depended upon any connexion with predecessors, or had the legitimacy of it required to be approved by the application of any such law as that which was in force amongst them, his approach to the altar would have been pronounced an act of sacrilege and profanation, and he himself would both have been excommunicated as a polluted individual, and visited with a retribution like that which was awarded to Uzziah. In the fact, on the other hand, that, while he had no official or recorded descent, he was nevertheless sanctioned by Heaven and acknowledged by men as a priest, evidence is furnished of his having sustained in his single person all the majesty and grandeur of an entire sacerdotal dispensation, and of his having thus concentrated a glory in himself which far outbulked the combined honors of all the thousands of Levites. Unlike theirs, which was continually transferring itself from one officiate and generation to another, his priesthood knew nothing of pedigree, descent, or succession. It never was vested in another before him. The duties of it were all performed by himself. He was the only officiate who ever entered its sanctuary. It was held by neither predecessor nor successor. The economy during which it continued was co-extensive with the period of his services. In necessary connexion, therefore, with his want of genealogy, he had, when viewed simply in his official capacity, 'neither beginning of days nor end of days.'

* Heb. vii. 6.

This expression, like the others which precede it, must be understood, not absolutely, but technically. Melchizedek, had doubtless in the literal import of the words, both 'beginning of days and end of life;' but, regarded as a priest, he had neither. His abiding a priest 'for ever' is to be interpreted, not of a literal eternity, but simply of 'an age' or 'an economy,'—a sense which the word rendered 'ever' or 'continually' often bears in the scriptures. He is viewed in a light of contrast to the priests of the Jews. The economy during which their priesthood continued began at the appointment of Aaron, and did not terminate till the advent of Christ. Yet the word 'ever' is almost uniformly employed by Moses to express the period of its duration. Comparatively short as it was, it stretched along the heads of many generations. No one priest lived longer than during a very limited portion of its continuance. Every Levite was regarded as constituted not for the economy or 'for ever,' but only for an integral part of it, or for a circumscribed time. His position lay between that of a predecessor, and that of others who succeeded him. He was wedged into a mere chink of the dispensation not only by his mortality, but likewise by a law which proscribed his officiating except for a given season of his lifetime. No candidate was allowed to serve as High Priest before thirty years of age, nor to enter even the Holy Place before twenty-five; and all, whatever was their sphere or their personal superiority, were expelled from the sanctuary and dismantled of their official robes at the age of fifty. 'Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, from thirty years old or upwards even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.*' 'This is it that belongeth unto the Levites:

* Num. iv. 2, 3.

from twenty and five years old and upward, they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and, from the age of fifty years, they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more.*

There was thus a twofold restriction upon the period of a Levite's ministration. There was the restriction of death which prevented his life from being co-extensive with the existing dispensation; and there was the still narrower restriction which consisted in a legal prohibition of his services, except during the twenty years of his life-time that lay between the ages of thirty and fifty. By both of these was he prevented from continuing 'for ever' or during the economy; and by each of them was there marked out the end and the beginning of his days. As a man, the mortality of his nature confined his natural life-time to the period between his birth and his death; and as a priest, the prohibition against a sacred ministration except at a given season of life, confined his official life-time at longest, if he was a common priest, to five and twenty years, and, if he was a High Priest, to twenty. In two distinct ways he had thus beginning of days and end of life. In his manhood, he had them naturally at his birth and at his death; and, in his priesthood, he had them officially at the commencement and at the close of his services, or at the ages of twenty-five or thirty and of fifty. Both the period of his earthly existence and the period of his sacerdotal officiations were properly called life-times. Either, therefore, as a man or as a priest, it could not be 'witnessed that he lived' as long as his priesthood.

The reverse of this, however, was true with Melchizedek; and it is the reverse of it which is taught when the

* Numb. viii. 24, 25.

apostle says, that 'he had neither beginning of days nor end of life, but abideth a priest continually.' Regarded officially,—and it is in this light that he is both viewed by Paul and contrasted to the Levites,—his life was free from all limitation, or, in other language, was unlimited or economically eternal. No period of his natural life-time was marked for either the commencement or the cessation of his sacerdotal officiations. No restrictions whatever upon his official life-time existed. Nothing was said of its having had either a beginning or an end; nor did any statute either recognize a legal time for its creation, or appoint a definite period for its continuance. An official birth and a sacerdotal death were alike unknown to Melchizedek. Destined to minister only for Abraham as a type of Christ's ministrations for the patriarch's spiritual seed, he existed long both before and after the economy with which his priesthood was concerned.

This economy did not extend throughout the whole period of even Abraham's life. It continued during that portion merely of his existence in which he was being constituted the father of the faithful. Nor did it embrace him either as an individual, or as the head of his natural posterity. It had respect to him simply as the figurative representative of the redeemed. The business of it was symbolically to perform for him in this character that work which is literally accomplished for the spiritual Israel by the Saviour. When this was effected, its object was gained. After the patriarch, therefore, had but once met with the King of Salem, had rendered him spiritual subjection, had acknowledged him as the priest of God, and had received his sacerdotal blessing, the dispensation or the covenant constitution of which Melchizedek was the mediator came to its termination.

The priest himself, however, still continued to exist just as he had been in being long before its commence-

ment. It hence was still 'witnessed that he lived.' When the economy of his priesthood began, he was found by it already clothed with his official vestments; and when, with the completion of its work of ministration for Abraham, it finally closed, he remained unbereft of either natural or sacerdotal life. He stood, in regard to it, as Aaron would have done in respect to the Jewish dispensation had he been consecrated previous to the Sinaitic legislation, performed all the duties of his order without any associate, subordinate, or successor, and survived the abolition of it which accrued, at the advent of Christ, from the accomplishment of all its intended purposes. Melchizedek had thus an official or economical immortality. The whole of his typical priesthood swept by in all the extent of its glory, duration, and completedness, while he continued unsubdued and untouched by death. The days of its continuance had no existence till after he sprang into being; and they could not, in the nature of things, either mark the beginning of his life or measure its extent. They had all passed away and been merged into eternity before he disappeared from the earth; and they were hence incapacitated from noting either the fact or the period of his death. He pre-existed their origin, and out-lived their demise. Regarded, consequently, as a priest, and viewed in connexion with the economy which he mediated, 'he had neither beginning of days nor end of life, but abode a priest continually.'

In all these things, the King of Salem was 'made like unto the Son of God.' They were all descriptive and typical of that perfect priesthood whose duties he wholly and exclusively performs. He, too, was 'without father, without mother, and without descent;' for 'he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe of which no man gave attendance at the altar; for it is evi-

dent that our Lord sprang from Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.* Amongst the genealogies of the Levites, not a solitary trace could be found of his descent, even in a manner the most remote, from Aaron. If we 'seek his register among those who are reckoned by genealogy, it cannot be found.'

Nor can the truth of his being without recorded pedigree, be in the slightest affected by those actual genealogies of him which are contained in the gospels. They shew, indeed, the various generations of his ancestry both by his mother and by his reputed father; but they both prove him to have sprung directly from David, and concern him entirely in his regal capacity. They have no bearing, either overt or implied, upon his pontifical character. By making it apparent that his connexion according to the flesh was with the tribe of Judah, they shew that he could not have possibly been registered among the priests. Instead, therefore, of disproving, they directly support the position, that, in his priesthood, he was 'without genealogy,' and, in the technical language of the ancients, 'without father and without mother.' Even could evidence, detached from the inspired and approved record which was kept in the sanctuary, have been adduced in proof of some relationship having actually existed between him and the Levites, it would not only have been useless in establishing a claim for him to Levitical genealogy and prerogatives, but would have left it an unimpaired truth that, in his pontificate, he was utterly parentless. The children of Barzillai may have had their descent unambiguously recorded in the private documents of the Gileadite whose daughter their son took to wife; but, while they failed to find their register in the genea-

* Heb. vii. 13, 14.

logies of the sanctuary, the production of the most unexceptionable testimony from such a quarter, could not have prevented their being put as polluted from the priesthood.* Not even a proof of this secondary nature, however, could be found in the case of our Lord. He purely and altogether belonged to a tribe of which no man gave attendance at the altar. In his priestly character, therefore, he was most emphatically fatherless, motherless, and without descent.

Like his type, moreover, 'he had neither beginning of days nor end of life.' In the office which he filled, there were none who went before him, and none who came after him. From the moment of his appearance in the world, he was acknowledged, by those who perceived his real character, as the mediator between God and man,—an office which not less certainly involves the priesthood, than it is always referred to when the names 'Jesus' and 'the Christ' are employed in announcing him. Whenever, either prospectively under the old economy or actually under the new, we view him as incarnate, we necessarily regard him both generally in his messiahship, and particularly in his priesthood. All the intimations which are made of him, from the first promise given to Adam, through every type and prophecy of the Jewish dispensation, down to the mention of him in the latest ages of time, pourtray him as possessed of those sacerdotal prerogatives which are inseparable from the performance of his mediatorial work. The Levites truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death—they followed one another in a long line of succession, and each individual of the line was cut down and carried off by death, and was supplanted by another who, after fluttering away his little hour, was

* Neh. vii. 63, 64.

subverted in his turn—‘but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.’* Eternally set apart as he was by the purpose and the oath of Jehovah, and literally consecrated by the announcement of the divine mind in the very act of his incarnation, he stood arrayed in his priestly vestments at the rise of the dispensation or the constitution of which he was the surety. Without its having needed to employ a predecessor, it found him ready to enter on the execution of his work; and it will pass away and lose itself in eternity without requiring a successor, or experiencing a cessation or a diminution of his ministrations. It remains exclusively in his hands, and can never transfer its duties or its honors to another. As a priest, he both pre-existed and will out-live its continuance. Though, as a victim, he once died in the midst of it, yet is he now alive for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death.† ‘The law maketh men High Priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore.’‡

By Christ, then, being without father, mother, genealogy, beginning of days, or end of life, we are to understand his having had no predecessor in his official capacity, his having been, from the earliest notice of him, acknowledged as a priest, and his holding a priesthood which cannot be transferred, in either the work or the glory of it, to successors. When all the expressions are combined, they teach the individuality of his order, its utter exclusiveness of succession, and its consequent perpetuity and perfection. ‘He abideth a priest continually, and ever liveth to make intercession’ for his people.

We are to remember, however, that, along with the

* Heb. vii. 23, 24.

† Rev. i. 18.

‡ Heb. vii. 28.

apostle, we are still employing, not absolute, but technical phraseology. Although the Redeemer was without predecessor in his office, had not, in the language of the ritual, any beginning of days, and was set apart in an everlasting decree to the discharge of his official functions, he nevertheless performed none of the sacerdotal duties till he was born of the Virgin, and became a real partaker of flesh and blood. He began, at the moment of his birth, to minister at the altar; but till then he was confined in only in the faith of his future coming and atonement. Notwithstanding, therefore, his having had no beginning of days, his priesthood itself had a literal commencement.

Although, upon the same principle, he is without end of life, the duties and the existence of his office will have a real termination. As a priest, it is true, he is spoken of, like Melchizedek his type, as everlasting; but the perpetuity of the one's priesthood, as well as that of the other, has concern, not with an absolute eternity, but merely with a complete dispensation.

The word, we have already remarked, which our translators render 'ever' is known by all critics, whenever it occurs either in the pentateuch or in any other part of the divine word which adopts the phraseology of the ritual, to have the signification of 'economy,' dispensation,' or 'age.' 'The heave-shoulder and the wave-breast shall they bring, with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave it for a wave-offering before the Lord; and it shall be thine, and thy sons with thee, by a statute *for ever*.*' 'One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance *for ever* in your generations.†' 'The first fruit also of thy corn, and of thy wine, and of thine oil, and

* Lev. x. 15.

† Num. xv. 15.

the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give the priest; for the Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons *for ever*.* From these and a multitude of other passages which might be quoted, it is obvious, that the period which is designated by the term '*ever*,' was co-extensive with the duration of the ceremonial economy. The wave-offerings, the ordinances respecting the strangers who were proselyted to the Jewish faith, the laws concerning the Levitical priests, and the many other ceremonial institutions the precise time of whose existence it expresses, were all appointed to continue only till the advent of the Messiah. Its import, when it is applied to them, must hence be strictly synonymous with dispensation.

It is well known, too, that, while the former economy, in reference to its typical nature, was usually, during the time of its continuance, denominated '*former*' or '*introductory*,' the Christian, in its retrospective bearing upon that which preceded it, is called, in the scriptures both of the Old Testament and the New, the '*future age or economy*,' or '*the age which was to come*.' The period which transpires between the Redeemer's death and the consummation of all things, had thus both the same epithet applied to it and the same economical nature affirmed of it, as that which elapsed between the giving and the abolition of the Mosaic ritual. With the same propriety as its precursor, it is technically spoken of as '*everlasting*,' or as appointed to continue '*for ever*.' The perpetuity of our Lord's priesthood, therefore, we must understand, not as meaning a literally eternal duration, but as referring, in contra-distinction to that of the Aaronites, to its intransferable and exclusive continuance in his hand

* Deut. xviii. 4, 5.

during the whole existence of the economy. The priests of Levi were many—they followed one another in a long course of succession, and individually occupied but a meagre fraction of that space through which the dispensation extended; but Christ continueth 'for ever'—he sustains the pontifical character, and discharges the functions of his priesthood, throughout the entire period which elapses between the rise and the termination of the Christian age. That no more than this is affirmed is evident from the very word employed by the apostle which our version translates 'unchangeable.*' That vocable does not, as our translation of it seems to imply, signify that which passes not away or is imperishable; but it denotes that which is not transferred from one to another, or which, whatever be its duration, remains, during the whole of its existence, in the same position, and in the possession of the same holder. When applied to the priesthood of the Saviour, it simply affirms his holding the office while it lasts, and can have no reference, either direct or implied, to an absolutely eternal duration. The economy which he mediates, it views as limited with equal certainty as that of Aaron. The priesthood of the latter, however, it regards as having passed from generation to generation, while that of the former it affirms to be incapable of transference from the only officiate who ministers at the Christian altar. Understanding, therefore, both it and the word rendered 'ever' in the sense which Paul evidently meant them to convey, the statement of the apostle teaches any thing but a literally everlasting mediatorship. 'This man, because he continueth *throughout the dispensation*, hath an *intransferable* priesthood.†

In harmony with this, the future termination of our Lord's priesthood is elsewhere, as we might have expected,

* ἀπαράβατος. Heb. vii. 24.

expressly taught in the Scriptures. 'Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*' There is unexceptionable evidence that the phrase rendered 'restitution of all things,' is to be understood in the sense of 'their consummation,' or of 'their final completion.†' They are those things of which God has spoken by his prophets from the beginning; or, in other words, they are the performances effected by Christ as a mediator which were promised and predicted during all the economies introductory to the Christian. Till the arrival of the period referred to by Peter, they are viewed as only in the process of accomplishment. In order to their being carried forward, and brought to an efficient termination, the Saviour is regarded as necessarily seated and retained 'in heaven,' or in the celestial sanctuary. There he will continue to minister as an intercessor till all things prophecied respecting the work of the mediatorial dispensation shall arrive at their restitution or perfect completedness. He will then depart from 'the heaven,' the holy place, or the scene of sacerdotal ministration; and, to those who look for him, he will come without a sin-offering unto salvation. The ends of his appearance in the sanctuary having all been gained, he will egress from the Holiest to bless with life that shall never end the worshippers without, to pronounce them a people who no longer require a priestly ministration, to give them in

* Acts iii. 19—21.

† Hesychius and Phavorinus make ἀποκαταστασις synonymous with τελειωσις. See Whitby on the passage.

everlasting season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, to utter over them the benediction he has fetched from the mercy-seat 'Come ye blessed of my Father,' and thus to attest to them the glorious completion and cessation of his work on their behalf, 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; and, when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.'*

This passage is full proof that the interpretation we have put upon that in the Acts is correct. It asserts, in the most unequivocal language, that the entire system of mediation will cease at the general resurrection, leaving us of course to infer, that the priesthood, as well as the other offices of Christ, will then have a termination. In the present state of things, men can approach the Deity only through the medium of his services; but then they will worship him without any medium whatever. The kingdom of the Saviour, in virtue of their connexion with which the faithful have now access to Jehovah, will itself be 'delivered up, and God shall be all in all.'

There are those, we are aware, who regard the kingdom spoken of by Paul as the kingdom of providence. This they justly enough view as subordinated to the administration of Christ, and as hence vested in his hands; and, the mediatorial ends of it having all been accomplished at the last day, they suppose that it is it which the apostle affirms will then be surrendered to the Father.

The very same argument, however, by which they make it the subject of the state, ~~ment~~, they might easily

* 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 28.

see, applies to every office which the Saviour holds. At the final judgment, all the objects will be gained, and all the work performed, not merely of Christ's rule in providence, but also of his spiritual government in the Church, of his instructing his people in the will of God, and of his carrying forward their moral renovation by his priestly officiations. The very work, in fact, which is treated of in the context both preceding and subsequent of Paul's assertion, is one which is embodied, not in our Lord's providential, but in his directly mediatorial procedure. The resurrection and glorification of his people's bodies, we have already seen to be the last result of his sacrificial work,—that result, in the realization of which, his ransomed will be perfected in the possession of salvation, definitively recovered to all which they lost by the fall, and brought to the enjoyment of that glory and confirmed holiness in heaven—the conferment of which forms the subject of all the Redeemer's intercessions. This result of the priestly work having been realized, all the designs at once of his teaching, spiritual rule, and sacerdotal ministrations, will be thoroughly accomplished. The redeemed will then be raised to the same situation in reference to the Deity as that which they occupied in paradise. For ever freed from sin and all its consequences, and brought to stand before God in his Temple, they cannot, as on earth, require the sanction of a mediatorial medium before they approach him with their adorations. Man in heaven and man in paradise holds equally immediate fellowship with Jehovah. In the one place as in the other, he is free from ignorance, and needs no instruction,—free from the inroads of all spiritual enemies, and needs no mediatorially regal defence,—free from all adverse incursions of providence, and needs no subor-
of them to his good,—free from both guilt and p-
and needs neither atonement nor intercession. All the

agencies which were plied for his moral well-being in the world, will hence be terminated in his final glorification at the advent of the Saviour. The Christian economy will then arrive at its close, the Christian administration will sum up the whole of its results, and the kingdom which stretched along the one and embraced the other, will be 'delivered up to God even the Father.'

'God being all in all,' we are thus to regard as his being worshipped without a medium; and, by the Son 'being subject to him,' we are to understand the cessation of the mediatorial administration. Christ, in the present state of things, is 'all in all,' to his people.* He is the only person of the Godhead whom they can immediately approach. There can be no intercourse with the Deity but through his ministrations. The glory of Jehovah can be seen only in his face. Divine attributes and excellence can be perceived by us in no way but as they are manifested in his character and doings as Immanuel. After the last judgment, however, the saved will behold the direct displays of the divine glory, be permitted to do God homage without the interception of a sacrifice, witness the immediate manifestation of his perfections from all the persons of Trinity, and be everlastingly 'as the angels in heaven.' The Saviour's administration will then give place to the direct government of the Godhead. As, at the commencement of the economy, he received, as Mediator, 'all power in heaven and in earth,'—'power to execute judgment also because he is the Son of Man;' so, at the close of it, when he shall have fixed the destinies of men, and thus have finished the work of his dispensation, will he strip this power of its mediatorial and manifest it in its purely divine character. Having, at the one period, been '*exalted*,' he will, at the other, be '*subjected*;' or

* Col. iii. 11 and ii. 10.

to explain the language, having, at the rise of the economy, been raised as Mediator 'above all principality and power,' he will, at the termination of it, shine forth in the single ascendancy of his divine nature. His mediatorial character will thus merge itself into the divine; and 'God shall be all in all.'

That Christ, indeed, will everlastingly exist in the personal union of the divine and human natures, is indisputable; and that he will also through eternity appear as the Head of his Church, seems, from many parts of God's word, to be no less evident. Yet his thus bearing the memorials of his work of redemption, is essentially different from his continuing to perform the duties of that work itself. The one is necessary for directing the praises and for preserving the ecclesiastical organization of the ransomed; but the other, on the contrary, would be an evident reflection upon the completedness of the salvation which they enjoy. If, after the close of the dispensation, intercessions should still be made on their behalf, instructions given them for the purpose of dissipating ignorance, and a special government exercised over them in addition to the purely divine administration under which the angels are placed; either these performances would be a mere nominal, needless, and unproductive procedure, or else they would assume the salvation of the glorified to have been but most partially effected at their entrance into heaven. Yet these are suppositions from either of which every scriptural principle and feeling instinctively revolts. Neither of them can possibly be true. Nor, for this very reason, can there be truth in the doctrine, that a mediation will exist after 'the consummation of all things.' The redeemed will then be placed under the same government as angels, introduced to the same society, brought into the same immediate contact with the display of God's glory, and eternally employed in the same manner and in the

same spirit in singing the same triumphant and adoring song. We thus 'look for a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,'*—a righteousness so confirmed, and so completely contrasting the moral character of those better worlds to that of our existing earth, that no longer will men require 'a days-man betwixt them and God.' 'I saw no Temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.† 'And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.‡

It will now be seen, then, in what light we are to view *the perpetuity* of Christ's priesthood. This respects merely its continuance throughout the whole Christian dispensation, and has no reference to an absolutely everlasting duration. In respect to it, it is contrasted, not to a priesthood which comes to a close, but to that of the Aaronites which passed through a succession of officiates. Theirs was transferable, but Christ's is intransferable. It remains exclusively in his own hands.

Now with this *perpetuity* of the Redeemer's priesthood is necessarily connected its *perfection*. The one is established on the same ground as the other,—that he, along with Melchizedek his type, was 'without father, mother, descent, beginning of days, or end of life.'

The argument from our Lord's being fatherless, motherless, and without descent, is thus stated by the Apostle: 'If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law) what farther need was there that another priest should rise after the

* 2 Pet. iii. 12. † Rev. xxi. 22. ‡ Rev. xxii. 3, 4.

order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is ~~made~~ of necessity a change also of the law. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which hope we draw near to God.*

The reasoning here is, in some respects, indirect; but it is not, on that account, the less conclusive. It establishes the necessary connexion which exists between a change of the priesthood and an abolition of the ceremonial law, shews the weakness and fragility of the ritual observances assumed by the necessity of doing them away, points out the superiority and perfect excellence of whatever, under the government of God, permanently supplants and supercedes what has been of divine appointment, and hence infers the unmingled perfection of a priesthood which, while it differed in the order of it from the Levitical, entirely abolished it and occupied its place. Though Christ, as a priest, was without genealogy, he was not, as others so situated would have been, 'put as polluted from the priesthood.' He received, on the contrary, a signally glorious call to it from God. The priesthood of the former economy was but the scaffolding with which he raised a genuine superstructure, and which required to be thrown down at the erection of the Christian edifice. It was in itself weak and unprofitable, and only served as the instrument of raising into view and rearing to a lofty elevation what is of a nature as invaluable as it is worthless, and as strong and stable as it is frail and fragile. The building consequently which occasioned its overturn is of solid and permanent material. 'He taketh away the first that he may establish the se-

* Heb. vii. 11, 12, 18, 19.

cond.* A superior force is necessary to oppose and neutralize an inferior. Had perfection been by the Levitical priesthood, there would not, with the divine sanction, have arisen another priest who is 'not called after the order of Aaron;' and if, when he actually did arise, perfection were not by his officiations, neither the commandment going before would have been disannulled, nor would his order have been permanently established. One imperfect thing, even though it had been allowed to supplant another, would not have been invested with such characters as would for ever prevent its own abolition in its turn. 'For if that first covenant had been faultless, there should no place have been sought for the second.† The imperfection of the Aaronic order was the solitary cause of its evanition; and the perfection of Melchizedek's must, on the same principle, be the only reason of its ascendancy over its predecessor. In this indirect yet satisfactory way, is the perfection of the Redeemer's priesthood proved from his not having belonged to the tribe of Levi.

The most pointed proof of it, however, is found in his having had 'neither beginning of days nor end of life.' Both from the nature and all the objects of a priesthood, it is obvious that the very institution of it by Jehovah is evidence that the ends of it will be accomplished. It assumes men to be in a morally lost and helpless condition; and it pledges itself to provide both an atonement for the removal of their guilt, and an intercession for the conferment upon them of the blessings consequent on reconciliation. The existence of it is intended to originate and cherish a hope that such effects will be the result of its ministrations. Were it, consequently, not to produce them, it would merely tend to practise such a

* Heb. x. 9.

† Heb. viii. 7.

deception upon men as would be most tantalizing to them, and altogether disparaging to God. It is not essential, indeed, that it should either define the precise time at which the efficient expiation shall be made, or prescribe the exact period of duration through which the necessary intercession shall extend. These are left entirely with the divine author of it, and are to be settled by his own sovereignty and wisdom. It was, therefore, no deterioration from it that, during the many centuries which elapsed between the institution of an order of it in the person of Aaron, or during the four thousand years which transpired between its absolute appointment in the first promise to Adam, and the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, it failed to furnish a victim or an intercession by which the objects of it were actually effected. While no pledge was given that these would be produced at an early period of the world's history, its fruitlessness throughout such a length of time, was neither an impeachment upon its actual worth, nor a reflection upon the sincerity of God in appointing it.

The case, however, would be completely reversed, could we allow ourselves to believe that such an unprofitableness would be true of it, till the termination of the world's existence. Proof would then be afforded that it had been throughout a fatal and illusive futility. The ends of it must hence be gained under the Christian economy,—the last under which the world will exist,—else they will remain till the close of time ungained, a delusion, and a mockery. Before the new dispensation, there was nothing but weakness and unprofitableness in sacerdotal performances. There cannot, from the co-extension of it with the portion of the world's being which is still to elapse, be any priest or priestly actings subsequent to the termination of the pontificate of Christ. If, therefore, we would surmount what will otherwise be an

insuperable argument against the divine sincerity, or do away what will, on any other hypothesis, be a solid proof of God's having only tantalized and deceived his creatures, we must come directly to the inference, that 'the Son who is consecrated for evermore,' 'hath for ever perfected those for whom he made atonement.'* 'This man, because he continueth throughout the economy, hath an intransferable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing that, during the whole dispensation, he liveth to make intercession for them.'†

The perfection of our Lord's priesthood is thus not only connected with its perpetuity in general, but connected with it also as it involves his permanent appearance in the Holy of Holies. This necessarily follows from the counterpart which his session exhibits to the necessity there was for the Aaronic High Priests, on the day of annual atonement, returning from the Holiest immediately after the finishing of their sacrificial ministration. They were personally sinful, and had to make expiation, first for their own sins, and then for the people's.‡ When they entered the Holy of Holies, they were not permitted to remain. Even though they had, the mortality of their nature and the consequent evanescence of their priesthood, would have brought a certain and speedy termination upon their services. It was physically impossible that an order which was constitutionally held by a succession of officiates, could have perpetually retained any holder of it in his office. He was compelled by law to retire from the Holiest on the same day on which he entered it; and, though this law had been transgressed, he would soon have been torn away by death from the ground which he occupied. Christ, on the other

* Heb. x. 12. † Heb. vii. 24, 25. ‡ Heb. vii. 27.

hand, continues in the heavenly places till the end of time. He has neither beginning of days nor end of life. He can neither be affected by a mortalizing influence, nor followed by a successor in office. He must hence remain till the end of the dispensation. 'And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.'*

The daily ministration of the Levites which was conducted in the holy place, was occasioned by the High Priest's exclusion, except on the great day of atonement, from the Holiest of all. It argued the utter inefficiency of the sacrifices which he had offered, and the thorough worthlessness, in a moral way, of his pontifical performances. Had these been of value, and had the efficient objects of a priesthood been accomplished by him, he would not have returned, nor would the daily sacrifices have continued to be made. 'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offer year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect; for then, would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more consciousness of sins.'† The unprofitableness of the sacrifices and the imperfection of the priesthood are inferred from the repetition of the services; or, which is strictly synonymous, they are proved from the failure of one offering in retaining the High Priest in the inner sanctuary. One year's sacrifice being essentially worthless, he was compelled to retire when he had offered it. On the next annual day of expiation, he presented another as fruitless as its predecessor. Thus was he

* Heb. x. 11, 12.

† Heb. x. 1, 2.

driven to offer one year by year continually, always approaching anew the Shechinah, and as frequently remanded away from its presence. In these sacrifices there was hence a remembrance again made of sins every year,* a standing proof erected of their total inutility, and solid evidence afforded that the sacerdotal order under which they were presented was in every way imperfect.

The case, however, is completely reversed with the Redeemer. He offered up only one sacrifice, and, after having by it purged away our sins, he sat permanently down on the right hand of the majesty on high.† On his presentation of it in the heavenlies, he required not to return and offer up another. Hence springs the proof of the consummate perfection of his sacerdotal work and character. 'He needeth not daily as those High Priests to offer up sacrifice; for this he did once when he offered up himself.‡' 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the Holy Place once a year with the blood of others, but now once in the end of the dispensation hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without a sin-offering, unto salvation.§' So true is it that the permanence of his appearance proves the completeness of his previous piacular work, that not only is there, in consequence of it, an assurance given of a certain salvation to those who look for him, or of a personal realization of the perfect expiatory and intercessory results of a priesthood

* Heb. x. 3. † Heb. i. 3. ‡ Heb. vii. 27. § Heb. ix. 24—28.

by all who believe, but there is moreover an averment, that, even before that completed salvation shall be actually conferred, there will exist no room for any further particular ministration. His work is not only declared to be perfect as a whole, and in a view of it which comprehends a survey of the entire dispensation; but it is affirmed to be perfect now. The proof which is afforded by his permanent session, is not of the acceptance of a sacrificial service which is good in its beginning, and which contains a pledge of its perfect accomplishment when the economy is finished; but it is the proof of the consummate efficiency and the actual completion of it in a single-handed offering which has already been presented. When he appears the second time to salvation, he will be altogether without a sin-offering. No additional sacrifice will be required, nor any act of completion to the one he has already made.

The argument from the perpetuity to the perfection of Christ's priesthood is thus disclosed by considering the consequences of his permanent session in heaven. It is seen, however, in a still clearer light by reflecting on the nature of that sanctuary in which his offering was presented. 'He is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself.' Not only, in consequence of its having been merely the figure of the true, would his appearance in the earthly sanctuary have been discordant with the purely spiritual nature of his order; but it would also have materially if not thoroughly affected the truth of his permanently remaining in it, and of the consequent perfection of his sacrifice. On account of its materiality, the earthly house could not, without a miracle, have continued to the end of the Christian economy. Had the Saviour's sacrifice been presented in this, its incompleteness would with certainty have been evinced by the decay of the building, its dissolution, and its inter-

ference with the uninterrupted continuance of his session. 'For if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law, who serve unto the shadow and example of heavenly things.* The services of the earthly tabernacle, in all the references they had to moral guilt, could at best have been but the emblems of those efficient performances which are conducted in the celestial holy places. Those who accomplished them were appointed, like themselves, by nothing more than 'the law of a carnal commandment.' Both they and the superstructure in which they ministered were evanescent. Sacrifice, priest, and sanctuary were all stamped with the same fading character. The transferable priesthood and the perishing erection were mutually adapted. The Levites were the only befitting officiates in a tabernacle, all whose structure and officiations were divinely appointed as the mere types of a sacerdotal dispensation really effective. Those priests, therefore, who were according to the law, who soon vanished from the earth, and who could exterminate no moral iniquity, were the appropriate officiates of a system which was marked throughout with imperfection.

The Son, on the other hand, who was 'consecrated after the power of an endless life,' who received a priesthood which is intransferable, and who sits, during the whole of the economy, on the right hand of God, could serve in no such temporary or material sanctuary as the Levitical. On earth, indeed, he immolated his sacrifice; but in no mutable edifice can he appear as the priest of his permanent dispensation. 'He is a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.† He has entered into heaven itself. This has received him until the times of the con-

* Heb. viii. 4, 5.

† Heb. viii. 2.

summation of all things.' It is not and cannot be subjected to any deteriorating or destructive influence. Hence is the fact of his having for ever sat down on its mercy-seat, convincing evidence of the thorough contrast between the absolute inutility of all the Aaronic ministrations, and the glorious perfection of those which are performed in his priesthood. 'Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went the High Priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*

In every way, then, in which we can view the perpetuity of Christ's priesthood,—in its abrogation and supplantation of the Aaronic order, in its eviction of the weakness and unprofitableness of the Jewish economy, in its necessary exclusion of any subsequent High Priest to our Lord, in its co-extension with the whole remaining term of the world's existence, and in its connexion with the permanent session of the Saviour in the heavenly

* Heb. ix. 6—12.

sanctuary,—it involves and establishes the thorough perfection of his pontifical character, the lasting and consummate worth of the sacrifice which he offered, and the prevalence and efficiency of the intercession which he perpetually conducts. ‘He hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.’* ‘As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.’†

IV. *Its Junction with a Kingship of Righteousness and Peace.*

The fourth and last peculiarity in the sacerdotal order of Melchizedek is the union of the priestly with the regal office. ‘This Melchizedek, King of Salem, is first, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is king of peace.’

A mere cursory glance at this statement might perhaps lead us to suppose, that when it speaks of another office than the priesthood, its only object is to describe the nature and properties of Melchizedek's royalty. By a closer inspection of it, however, we will discover, that, though such a description is confessedly a subsidiary design of it, the great purpose for which it is made, is to pourtray a singular and important feature of his sacerdotal order. Paul and Moses, we have already remarked, speak of him, in all their references to his person and history, solely in his priesthood. Without assuming this, all the reasonings respecting him and his antitype in the Epistle to the Hebrews, will be divested, not only of cogency, but even of consistent meaning. No use is

* Heb. viii. 6.

† Zech. ix. 11.

made in them of the Old Testament accounts of his character which can raise a suspicion of their having connexion with what is civil or secular, or with any thing else than a pure and true priesthood. The statement, therefore, of the fact and nature of his royalty, must have for its primary object, not a portraiture of his regal history and qualifications, but the simple intimation of a peculiarity in his priestly order.

Nor is this to be conceived of as consising either in any engraftment made upon it of characters which are strictly regal, or in any amalgamation of its duties with the performances and prerogatives of royalty. It lies in the simple circumstance that a priesthood is united and harmonized in the same person with a kingship of righteousness and peace. The two offices are viewed as simultaneously vested in one man, as co-operating in a process of respective action and re-action, and as placed in an attitude of mutual subserviency. Each of them had, hence, various relative properties of a modifying and important description of which it could not have been possessed had it been detached from the other.

That which distinguishes our race from superior intelligences on the one hand, and from the inferior animals on the other, is nothing peculiar in the structure of either body or mind, but merely the union and mutual subordination of the two in a complex constitution. While there is no intermixture of the mental part with the corporeal, they exist in a state of most intimate connectedness. Both retain their essential nature, and as purely discharge their functions as when they are found single-handedly in other orders of the creation. The pulsation of the heart, the motion of the lungs, the operations of the digestive organs, and all the other animal movements of the body, are conducted in precisely the same way in man, as in those creatures which are destitute of rational mind; and

the recollections of memory, the rapid wheelings of the imagination, the instant decisions of intuitive judgment, the expansive comprehensions of generalization, and every other purely intellectual process, are evidently analagous, if not entirely identical, in man and in unembodied spirits. Mind performs its part as mentally in us as in the intelligences who are not encumbered with united matter; and the animated body discharges its functions as vitally and perfectly in brutes, as when in man it is dignified and aided by an inhabitation of rational intellect. Yet, notwithstanding all this, there is in both mind and body as they exist in us a grand peculiarity of which they are divested in every other species of beings with which we are acquainted. While they are perfectly distinct in themselves, there is so intimate an union between them that, in the performance of their respective offices, they are mutually and powerfully subservient. The mind is frequently elevated or depressed by the vigor or the sickness of the body; and the body is often strengthened or borne down by the exhilarations or exhaustions of the mind. The animal movements of man are possessed of an elasticity, a force, a versality, and a duration of which they are utterly destitute in the inferior creation; and in him, the intellect, in consequence of its union with organized matter, is modified and affected in its operations, and both receives its perceptions of objects without and sustains shocks and excitements in its sensations from objects within, in a manner with which angels, in an experimental way, are wholly unacquainted. Hence the distinguishing characteristic of our species. The inferior animals have bodies similar to ours; the higher intelligences inherit a mind substantially the same as our intellect; yet both generically differ from us in wanting these two constituent parts of our nature in a state of junction and of mutual co-operation.

Now by attending to this analogy, we may discover how Melchizedek's royalty is to be regarded as a peculiarity of his priesthood. The offices were not mingled or confounded in either their prerogatives or their duties. They were merely held contemporaneously by the same individual, and modified their respective functions by a mutually re-acting and auxiliary influence. The King of Salem issued his mandates, commanded his armies, governed his subjects, and levied his tribute, purely in his regal capacity. In these and in all other acts of a similar description, his sacerdotal powers made no compromise or interference with his regal procedure. Nor did his kingship, on the other hand, deteriorate, in the remotest way, any of his performances which were pontifical. He made expiation, pronounced benedictions, received tithes from worshippers, and, in all other things, acted for men in things pertaining to God, purely as a priest. Still, however, in virtue of both offices having been united in his person, there were a subserviency, a co-operation, an involution, and a re-acting mutuality between them, which both enabled him to discharge their respective duties with energy and adaptation, and imparted to each of them a characteristic speciality and beauty. From the peculiar circumstances of a people, the two offices, in their performances on their behalf, often require to be simultaneously plied. It is in such cases that the benefits of their union are seen and enjoyed. When they go hand in hand in respectively affording either expiation and protection, or intercession and deliverance, their mutual auxiliation is felt with a force of which separate functionaries can have no experience. The one office requires a class of qualifications entirely different from those which are requisite for the other. Heroism, a generalizing mind which easily surveys and calculates the many materials of government, and intrepidity and power to repel hostilities, are indispen-

sable in a king. A priest, on the other hand, must be compassed with infirmity, possessed of tender and compassionate sympathy for those who are out of the way, and able to enter minutely into the various items of individual character and action. When these contrasted orders of qualities, therefore, are united in a single person, and when they are conjunctly displayed in his official procedure, they of necessity so powerfully modify and affect each other as palpably to distinguish the man whom they invest from every personage purely royal or pontifical.

This illustration makes it plain, that, while the mere fact of Melchizedek's being at once a priest and a king sufficiently distinguishes him from all the priests of the Aaronic order, there were other things, originating in the union of the two offices, which, in addition to the fact itself, make the distinguishment both prominent and important. It is, we apprehend, in an explanation of these, and in a statement of the peculiarity which they constitute in the order of his priesthood, that the apostle so carefully traces the derivation and expresses the import of his names. 'First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem which is king of peace.' To vindicate Paul in the use which he makes of them, it is necessary to assume that, either prophetically at his birth, or declaratively by a subsequent oracle, these names were given both to Melchizedek and to the place of his reign, for the direct purpose of designating the special character he should sustain as the priest of the Most High God. We are hence, along with the apostle, warranted to understand them, not as mere appellatives, but as official descriptions.

The name 'Melchizedek' signifies 'king of righteousness,' points out the holy nature and tendencies of his royalty, and refers to the influence which this character of it exerted upon the performances of his priesthood.

No compromise could be made of the prerogatives of the one office, while he was discharging the functions of the other. They watched over the preservation of each other's purity, co-operated in the execution of their respective duties for extirpating sin from constituents, and simultaneously exerted their energies, the one toward God and the other toward man, for the promotion of moral goodness. The kingship of righteousness was necessarily accompanied with the highest love of excellence, a hatred of moral evil in all its modifications, and a consequent desire to effect the conferment upon the sinful of the righteousness which it loved. It hence secured the most rigorous attention to the holiness, justice, and goodness of the law ; it prevented any indifference in the priesthood to a full extermination of slight as well as of aggravated depravities ; it necessarily withheld the blessings of sovereign forgiveness, regal guardianship, and royal complacency, from every offender whose sins had not been thoroughly expiated ; and it, consequently, urged its sister office forward in the speedy and complete execution of its sanctifying purposes.

The subserviency of the kingship's ' righteousness ' to the priesthood, is thus most apparent. Nor is ' that of its ' peace ' less evident. All the individual and national evils of our world originate in the existence of sin, and can be destroyed by no other species of effort but that which effects its extermination both legal and moral. They are a judicial infliction of God upon offenders, and can be withdrawn only by a proper satisfaction being made to the divine law which awards them. In order to a successful removal of them by a king who loves the peace, desires the happiness, and promotes the prosperity of his subjects, he must employ the services of an efficient priesthood. Of these he must avail himself, both for the doing away of guilt, and for the extirpation of depravity. He must lay

himself and his subjects at the feet of the priest who is empowered to act for them in things pertaining to God ; and, influenced by strong solitudes for the extension of true felicity in his kingdom, he will use every entreaty and stimulant with the sacerdotal officiate, for urging him sedulously forward in performing his work of propitiation. Hence, when the priesthood as well as the kingship is vested in his own person, will there be an energy, an unintermittedness, and an anxious assiduity in the priestly services, of which they would be destitute if executed by an agent who possessed not the prerogatives of ministering to men, as well as on their behalf. The officiate, empowered as a king to minister to men, while capacitated as a priest to propitiate the Deity, will have the highest promptitude alike in securing from God the blessings of his favor, and in afterwards dispensing them himself among his subjects. His solicitude for their peace as their king, and his efforts to obtain it as their priest, will thus powerfully co-operate for extending to them a vastly higher well-being than could be secured by two independent officiates.

Nor, while the kingly attributes of righteousness and peace exert such an auxiliary influence upon the priesthood, is the remotest injury inflicted upon the rectitude, purity, or independence of either of the offices. This is thoroughly prevented, and the perfection and harmony of both fully preserved, by the order in which the attributes co-operate: *'First* being, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and *after that* also King of Salem, which is king of peace.' The demands of purity are met, before misery is removed or happiness conferred. The love of righteousness takes the precedence of the love of peace. The desire for the people's happiness makes no compromise whatever of a strict regard to the previous rescue of them from sin. Both attributes put forth an auxiliary

stimulus upon the priesthood; but they unite with it in respect for the honor of the divine administration. The one exclaims for the forthcoming of felicitous well-being; but the other goes before it requesting the aggrandizement and display of purity. 'The work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and peace for ever.*'

How all this may have been true in the case of Melchizedek, may not, at first sight, be very apparent. He has, for the sake of illustration, been spoken of as having commanded armies and ruled his subjects, and has been represented as having had literally a number of both regal and sacerdotal constituents. For reasons formerly stated, however, it seems manifest, both that the economy of his priesthood was commensurate merely with the period of Abraham's being constituted the father of the faithful, and that the patriarch in his typically representative character as the figurative head of spiritual Israel, was the only individual for whom he sacerdotally officiated.

Whether his officiations included the making of atonement for Abraham, the inspired narrative does not directly inform us. Yet that they did, appears to be assumed by the fact of his having blessed him, or of his having performed on his behalf that part of priestly work which is subsequent to a propitiatory appearance in the Holiest, which is synonymous with bestowing the divine favor or transferring the results of expiation, and which involves the begun if not even the finished execution of the services of intercession. This blessing of him was what Melchizedek specially performed for the patriarch when he met him returning from the slaughter of the kings. He had either virtually or actually made expiation for him previous to the rencountre, and was then viewed as in

* Isa. xxxii. 17.

his state of exaltation, as discharging merely the function of intercession, as 'sitting a priest upon his throne,' and as warranted, in conjunction with his overt advocacy for his constituent, regally to confer upon him the blessings which he had sacerdotally secured. He had not then to extricate him from condemnation. This he had already effected. The only priestly work which it remained for him to perform, was the intercessory commendation of him and his services to God. Regarded, therefore, as already exalted a prince and a priest, he merely required to 'bless' the patriarch, or first to secure blessings for him by his intercession, and then to bestow them upon him by his kingship.

When Melchizedek, then, 'blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the Most High God who hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand,'* and when, in companionship with this service, he 'brought forth bread and wine'† for his refreshment; we discover both the execution of his priestly performance itself, and the regular co-operation with it of his kingship of righteousness and peace. As a king who loved equity, he hailed his return from a righteous war, and congratulated him on his victory; as a king of peace, he rejoiced at his destruction of hostilities, welcomed his restoration to tranquillity, and dispensed to him joyous pledges of the divine favor; and as a priest interceding for him with the Deity, he commended both himself and his prayers to Jehovah, pled for his permanent and still more extensive possession of heavenly blessings, and thanked the Most High God for having discomfited his enemies. His establishment in righteousness, and the confirmation and enlargement of his peace, were the great blessings for

* Gen. xiv. 19, 20

† Verse 18

which Melchizedek interceded on his behalf. These the King of Salem solicited, not as a king, but as a priest. The request was purely intercessory; yet, presented in any circumstances but especially in those in which the officiate, at the moment, stood, it had a peculiar energy imparted to it, in its bearing upon both rectitude and happiness, by the appended kingship of righteousness and peace. Interested, as a king, in both the uprightness and the peaceful termination of Abraham's warfare, and desirous, from the attributes of his royalty, that the patriarch should increase in goodness and felicity, he was, as an intercessor, vastly more urgent in pleading for his constituent's wider inheritance of both holiness and enjoyment, than had he not been at once King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High God.

In all this, however—it scarcely needs to be repeated—Melchizedek was but the type of a greater than he who should arise after his order. All his services for Abraham were mere prefigurations of those which should be performed by the Saviour for his redeemed. The genuine import, therefore, and the full glory of a kingship's co-operation with a priesthood, are to be found only in the ministrations of our Lord.

Now so accurately did the characters of the type prefigure or rather portray those of the Redeemer, that, when we inspect the inspired accounts of his sacerdotal performances, and remark the way in which they represent them to have been affected by the properties of his kingship, we feel that to him, as well as to Melchizedek, may be applied without retrenchment or modification, the whole description given of the latter: 'He is first by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is king of peace.' Short and condensed as this description is, it embodies every material of all the more extended portraiture of the Saviour's

royalty, and affords a summary exhibition of all the variety of ways in which they point out the sacerdotal and regal offices to be mutually subservient. 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity; therefore God thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.* 'Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.† 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute justice and judgment in the earth. In his days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.‡

The connexion between the priesthood and the kingship of righteousness is so close, that the happy and efficient results of the one accrue to the sinner in companionship with the manifested characters and prerogatives of the other. While the Saviour's sceptre or administration is stamped with rectitude, and necessarily leads to the display of a love of holiness and a hatred of iniquity, he possesses, in consequence of it, that rich and odoriferous unction of the Spirit which is poured upon his head as the High Priest of his people, flows over his beard down to the skirts of his priestly garment, and imparts spiritual life and elasticity, strength and gladness to all the members of his body. He reigns, on the one hand, in

* Ps. xlv. 6-8.

† Isa. xxxii. 1, 2.

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

righteousness, and rules in judgment; and, on the other, he is a refuge to the weary, a covert to the tempest-beaten, and a solace to the morally thirsty and distressed. His love for the purity of his subjects, infuses warmth and importunity into his supplications for their deliverance from remaining depravity; his compassion for them amidst the pressure of their ignorance and the load of conscious guilt imposed by their occasional erring from the way, gives promptitude to those services in which he interposes his sacrifice between them and the Omniscient; and his regal concern for the remorse and the disquietudes which spring from the operations of inherent pollution, and are inseparable from their inhabitation of our dreary wilderness, a dry and thirsty land where there is no water, impart a special fervor to those intercessions in which he asks the Father for the outpouring on them of the Spirit, sheds around them the streams of living water, and causes to be dug for them pools in the desert that they may go from strength to strength until they appear before God in Zion.† While displayed to them as a prosperous king who executes justice and judgment in the earth, he is contemporaneously exhibited as himself that righteousness of theirs in virtue of which God is their God, acknowledges them for his own, and is just in having justified them from all their iniquity. Viewed by them as a righteous branch, they have confidence that the very rectitude of his administration impels forward his priesthood in freeing them from every impurity. They regard him as not only waving a sceptre of purity over their head, but, in consequence of this, as also securing for them, by his intercession, the continuation and the increase of a heavenly influence by which they will be purified by the washing of water with the word and ulti-

* Ps. cxxxiii. 2.

† Ps. lxxxiv. 6, 7.

mately cleansed from spot and blemish and every such thing.* 'In his days, therefore, Judah is saved, and Israel dwells safely.'

This shews the co-operation of the kingship's righteousness. That of its peace is equally apparent. While the Redeemer is not merely a peaceful king, but a king of peace, while he aims, throughout the whole of his administration, at the promotion of it in his subjects, and while the peace which he extends is suffused through the soul by the agency of the divine Spirit, the royalty must obviously operate in a way of high subserviency to an advocacy which pleads for the gift of the Comforter, the bestowment of grace 'to abound in hope and joy through the power of the Holy Ghost,' and the perpetual conferment of the comforts of love and of a 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' Those who are reconciled by the priesthood, are governed by the kingship. They are, at the same time, under the Saviour's regal authority, and in the course of realizing the results of his intercession. He at once rules them on earth, and pleads for them in heaven. Loving, therefore, as a king, their advancement in spiritual rejoicing, he prays with the highest interest, as their advocate, for the heavenly agency by which it is promoted. 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, unto them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation; thou hast increased their joy. They rejoice before thee as with the joy of harvest, as they rejoice who divide the spoil. For, the yoke of his burden, the staff laid on his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, hast thou broken, as in the day of Midian. For the greaves of the armed warrior in the conflict, and the garment rolled in much blood, shall be for a burn-

Eph. v. 26, 27.

ing, even fuel for the fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of peace.*

The darkness here referred to, is plainly the ignorance in which the Gentiles were of the Saviour and his atonement previous to the commencement of the new economy; and the light which they saw, was the manifestation to the believing amongst them of the mystery which was hid from former ages and generations, Christ in the faithful the hope of glory.† In the revelation of the Redeemer to their minds, or in the act of passing from darkness to light, they realized the results of his expiation, and henceforth became at once the subjects of his government, and the partakers of the tranquillity by which it is characterized. Such was the nature of the rule exercised over them, that it directly promoted the peace which was primarily derived by them from the atonement. Had the administration under which they were brought been not of a peaceful, but of a warlike description, their felicity would have been marred by excitements of the depraved tempers and propensities which remained in their hearts. Its bustling movements and its characters of warfare would have been incompatible with quietude and rest. The greaves of armed warriors, and garments rolled in much blood, are spectacles which could have excited no feelings but those of terror, a thirst for the transactions of the battle-field, or some other of the desolating emotions of man's heart. When instead, therefore, of a government exhibiting spectacles and characters like these, they were placed under a principedom of peace, an administration which is for the breaking of the

* Isa. ix. 1—5. Lowth's Tran. † Col. ii. 26, 27.

yoke of the burden, the staff laid on the shoulder, and the rod of the oppressor, they felt that they were the subjects of a kingship all whose acts enhance the peace derived from the atonement, and multiply the comforts which result from intercession. The design of the rule is to advance the peace of the subject; and, since it is personally conjoined with a priesthood, it stimulates its ministrations in the securing of felicitous well-being.

In the co-operation, however, the desire of peace is never permitted to compromise the love of righteousness. The promotion of happiness is always posterior to the advancement of holiness. Both attributes of the royalty subserve the objects of the priesthood; but each aids them in that order by which the harmony and purity of the respective offices is preserved. 'He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. In his days, shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.'* 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly. Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps.'†

We have now finished the illustration of what we conceive to be the peculiarities of the sacerdotal order of

* Ps. lxxii. 6, 7.

† Ps. lxxxv. 8—13.

Melchizedek. They are to be regarded, however, as having been merely typical in the King of Salem, and, in their reality and glory, are to be found only in our blessed Redeemer.

Melchizedek's having been of the order previous to our Lord, no more detracts from the single-handedness of the Saviour's priesthood, than if no prefiguration of his character and work had ever existed. The Jewish nation emblematically represented the Church of Christ; yet they were not, in the proper sense of the language, a Church themselves, nor did their typical character render it untrue that there is only one 'General Assembly and Church of the first born.' The existence of a type has no influence upon the numerical oneness of its antitype, and no more affects it, than the existence of a shadow adds to the magnitude of the substance which occasions it. Christ, notwithstanding the prefigurative priesthoods of the patriarchs, of Melchizedek, of Aaron, and of all the successive generations of Levites, is, with respect to the reality and effectiveness of sacerdotal character and services, the only priest or High Priest who has been ordained for men in things pertaining to God. 'There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.*' All the other priests who have ever existed, have either, under the Christian economy, surreptitiously assumed the names of the Redeemer, and, by an arrogation to themselves of what exclusively belongs to him, have acted the part and incurred the condemnation of Antichrists; or, under the Jewish dispensation, were divinely constituted his types, and, with the exception of their typical character which had direct reference to the one great High Priest who was to come, possessed none of the prerogatives and performed none of the mini-

* 1 Tim. ii. 5.

strations of an actual or efficient priesthood. The whole services of atonement and intercession which a real priesthood effects for our race, were accomplished throughout by our Lord. In him alone, they are substantial; and, in his types, they were merely emblematic. All the sacerdotal characters, therefore, of Melchizedek, we must view as mere illustrations of those effective and exalted properties in the pontifical constitution and actings of the Saviour, which they were intended to prefigure.

This conclusion leads us to understand the peculiarities of Melchizedek's order, not as features in our Lord's priesthood which distinguish it from those of other and different orders, but as absolute and essential properties possessed abstractly and inherently by itself. If, in proper language, no other priesthood exists, there can be none from which his needs to be distinguished. Its substantiality completely separates it from its types, and, when they are regarded as priesthoods, virtually denies their ever having existed. The qualities with which it is invested are, in no sense, comparative, but are, in every respect, absolute. What, therefore, we have hitherto seen it possessed of when compared with the prefigurations of it in the order of Aaron, we must view in a light of strict and abstract inherency.

Its supremacy is to be regarded, not as the mere ascendancy of it over the jurisdiction of the Levitical High Priests, or as consisting of a greatness which proves the inferiority and subordination of every other pontificate, but as an infinitude which expels every priesthood from our world but itself, as a solar splendor which lights away every luminary but itself from our hemisphere, as a focus which converges in itself all the rays of light and love and devotion of ransomed men, as a divine saviourship which demands the subjection of every individual of our race who has been reconciled to God and made an heir of

eternal life. The special dignity and glory which resulted from the manner of its institution, are not only peerless as compared with the inauguration and the subsequent pontifical career of Aaron, but they are the effulgence of his own innate excellencies, the manifestation of his boundless majesty and grandeur, and the bursting forth of all the unmeasured and immeasurable perfections of his divine nature. Its perpetuity is a consequence of the mysterious union which subsists, in his person, between humanity and Godhead. Its perfection is the glorious completion by it of the plan of mercy, its accomplishment of divine purposes respecting man which were commensurate with eternity, and the effecting by it of such a mighty moral deliverance of a lost and ruined world, as the combined energies of created beings could never have performed. Its union and co-operation with a kingship of righteousness and peace is but a complex view of the harmony, beauty, and grandeur of a multi-form process of human salvation, a stupendous apparatus of wheels within wheels, guided in its movements, upheld in its power, and conducted to its saving results by the single agency of one who is 'a wonder unto many,'* who wears 'a silver and a golden crown,'† who is the centre of attraction, the source of blessedness, and the object of adoration to the whole intelligent universe, who, by his own blood, redeemed us and made us kings and priests to God, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen. 'Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath

* Ps. lxxi. 7.

† Zech. vi. 11.

builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*

* Heb. iii. 1—6.

APPENDICES.

APPEND. I.

PROOFS THAT MELCHIZEDEK WAS NOT THE SON OF GOD.

MANY Christians imagine that Melchizedek and our Lord were the same person. To this notion, they frequently attach a very high importance. They often view the holding or the rejection of it as a test whether men are sound in their views of the Old Testament economy, and do not scruple, in connexion with it, to employ, toward those who differ from them in opinion, language unwarrantably severe. Yet why they do so, it is difficult, if not impossible, to conceive. It puzzles them to tell how the doctrine taught in the preceding pages, interferes, in the slightest, with consistent and accurate conceptions of the truths of God, either in a detached, or in a systematic form. They never think of denouncing it as a doctrine not according to godliness,—a doctrine either prejudicial to the moral influence of the gospel, or tending to confuse our ideas of the character and work of Immanuel. The reason is, they cannot. To bring such a charge against it, is beyond their power.

The compliment, however, cannot, we fear, be returned. Their idea of Melchizedek, we are compelled to regard as not only uncountenanced by scripture, but as likewise productive of some serious inconsistencies in their views of our Lord's priesthood. It leads them, if consistent with themselves, to view the Saviour as having been literally a priest in the days of Abraham. It detaches his priesthood from several qualifications for it,—such as manhood, compassment with infirmity, and subjection to the

divine law,—which the word of God avers to have been indispensable to its reality and efficiency. It represents him as having acted sacerdotally when he had no victim to present,—when he had materials for the work of neither atonement nor intercession. It thus at once confuses several important doctrines of the gospel, renders the argument with the Hebrews, to a great extent, unmeaning, and throws indeterminateness and doubt over various aspects of our High Priest's character and performances.

These, no doubt, are heavy charges, and, having been made, require to be substantiated. Their charges against us, they endeavour to establish simply by proving that Melchizedek was Christ. Ours against them, we might, in the same way, attempt to make good merely by shewing that Melchizedek was not Christ. This, however, we think to be insufficient. Not only should the identity be proved untrue, but the consequences of believing it should be traced and established. The error is of somewhat serious importance, and ought, on this account, to be thoroughly exposed. In endeavouring, then, to overthrow it, we remark, in the first place, that

I. No countenance is given to it by those expressions which are usually adduced for its vindication.

These are, 'Melchizedek was without father, without, mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life,' 'he abideth a priest continually,* and 'it is witnessed that he liveth.† All these phrases, with the exception of the last, have already been explained. They have been shewn to be not only consistent with the idea of Melchizedek's mere manhood, but also to be necessarily expressive of a limited period of duration. The language employed in them is conventional, refers not to abstract existence but to economical continuance, and, as used in reference to the King of Salem, implies nothing more than that he was without predecessor or successor in his priesthood, and both pre-existed and out-lived the dispensation during which it continued.

The last of the phrases,—'it is witnessed that he liveth,'—speaks in our version, indeed, as though, at the time when Paul

* Heb. vii. 2, 3.

† Heb. vii. 8.

wrote, he was still alive; but, in the original Greek, it affirms his existence to have been not only past but finished. The word rendered 'live' is there, neither in the present, nor even in the perfect or in the aorist tense, but in the *imperfect*,—a tense, the peculiarity of which, as distinguished from the other preterite tenses of a greek verb, is to mark the existence of a thing to have ended at some past and *definite* period. When, therefore, it was witnessed that Melchizedek '*lived*,' not only was it testified that, while the Levites had a transferable priesthood, his both rose and passed away with himself for its only officiate,—the point which Paul, in using the expression, evidently meant to illustrate,—but it was also witnessed, that his existence, either official or natural, had a real termination.

II. *The Advantages to the Christian Creed of identifying Christ and Melchizedek, are merely imaginary.*

These are all summed up in a supposed glory which the doctrine reflects upon the Saviour. The idea, it is alleged, of his having appeared as a real priest to Abraham, throws a lustre round his character of which it is not otherwise possessed. But does not such an allegation imply, that, had Christ appeared also as a prophet and a king two thousand years before he himself saw it proper to enter on the offices, he would have been invested with a higher excellence than that which now surrounds him? The notion is substantially, in fact, a quarrel with the lateness of the Redeemer's incarnation. It pretends to a greater wisdom than God's, and assumingly reproves him for not having sooner sent his Son into the world. The glory of Christ, it imagines to be seriously diminished by the thought of his priesthood not having commenced till the Christian era. It hence impugns the grandeur of all the other characters he sustains, declares that these are sorely injured and deficient by their not having been earlier assumed, and, to be self-consistent, ought, with the assistance of Cocceius who found Christ in every verse and person and transaction of the Bible, to descry our Lord as a prophet in the person of Moses, as a king in the person of David, and as a holder of the various characters of saviourship in such men as Solomon, Samson, and Jonah. It should, in short, be the business of those who cherish it, to prove the Redeemer literally a prophet, priest,

and king from the period of the first promise. Evidence of this, would, according to the inferences they draw from an identification of him with Melchizedek, add surpassingly to his excellence. Is this the way in which glory is to be reflected on the Saviour?

III. *Melchizedek could not have been Christ, because the Redeemer's call was not given him till his incarnation.*

Without a regular call from God, no one can, with impunity, minister at the altar. 'No man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.'*

This is the only call which the whole word of God represents our Lord to have received. It could not, in fact, have been twofold. 'The word of the oath' with which it was accompanied, 'consecrated him for evermore.'†. Once set apart, he could, neither in the nature of things nor from the permanent efficiency of that which installed him, have undergone a new inauguration. It was this oath which 'made him a priest,'‡—an oath which could not be revoked,—a communication of which Jehovah could not repent,—an instrument of consecration which could not be more than once employed.

Can it be shewn, then, that this divine oath, imparting to Christ his official character, investing him with sacerdotal prerogatives, and assuming his never having previously served at the altar, was sworn before his incarnation? Decretively, indeed, it was uttered in eternity; and prophetically, it was recorded by the Psalmist David. Neither the purpose nor the prophecy of it, however, conveyed its inaugurative power. To suppose the former, is to imagine Christ to have been a priest before the world began; to suppose the latter, is to conceive his priesthood to have commenced, not in the days of Abraham, but in the days of David. Yet, in the scriptures, 'the word of the oath,'—that utterance of swearing of the oath which made it an efficient or an actual call,—was neither in eternity, nor at the giving of the first promise.

* Heb. v. 4—6. † Heb. vii. 28. ‡ Heb. vii. 20, 21.

nor at the birth or in the life-time of the King of Salem, nor contemporaneously with the inspired penmanship of the psalmist, but only '*since the law.*'* It is pointedly represented as having been subsequent to the call of Aaron,—subsequent, in fact, to the authority of the Levitical priesthood. In the utterance of it, the word was suited to the action. Consecrating Christ by the language 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,' it was sworn in the act of his incarnation, and recognized his assumption of manhood, and his assumption of the priesthood, as acts simultaneous and interwoven. Not, therefore, until the close of the Jewish economy, was the Saviour a priest. He could not, consequently, have been Melchizedek who, two thousand years before, was distinctly called 'the priest of the Most High God.'

IV. *Christ and Melchizedek are expressly spoken of as different persons.*

'It is yet far more evident,' says Paul, 'that, after the similitude of Melchizedek, there ariseth another priest.'† The connexion of this verse with the preceding statements might, at first sight, be apt to originate the question, Whether is Christ called *another* priest as distinguished from Melchizedek, or as distinguished from the Levites? Such a question, however, would be senseless, since the distinction is manifestly between him and them both. As another priest, he is said to *arise*,—phraseology which implies that, subsequently to both, he assumed the sacerdotal character. Melchizedek had already appeared as a priest; the Levites had long ministered at the altar; and now there *arose* a new and *another* priest, different in nature from the latter, and made 'after the similitude' of the former.

The word ‡ rendered 'similitude' universally means a model as distinguished from its copy, establishes a distinctness between the pattern and the imitation, and is altogether incompatible with the idea of their identity. It is the word which is elsewhere used to express the manner of our Lord's subjection to sufferings. 'We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was, in all points, tried *after the similitude of us*, yet without sin.'§ Just as, in his exposure to

* Heb. vii. 2. † Heb. vii. 15 ‡ ὁμοιωτης. § Heb. iv. 15.

pain, he bore our image, so, in his sustinment of priestly character, did he bear the image of Melchizedek. The same relation exists between him and us in regard to mode of suffering, as that which existed between him and the King of Salem in respect to the order of priesthood. Hence, if his being a priest after the similitude of Melchizedek, means that he was Melchizedek himself; his having been, as a sufferer, after the similitude of men, must mean that Christ and mankind are the same,—that Jesus and men are names of the same signification. Such an inference is unavoidable. The idea, therefore, which supports it, must be thrown to the wind. The suffering Saviour was *tried after the similitude of men*: this proves that he and man are different and distinct beings. The sacerdotal Redeemer was *made after the similitude of Melchizedek*: that proves, in the same way, that he and the King of Salem could not have been the same person. Christ was ‘another’ priest who arose after his order.

V. *Melchizedek is said to have been ‘made like unto the Son of God,’—language which equally proves that he could not himself have been the Saviour.*

The verb * translated ‘made like unto’ refers, like the noun rendered ‘similitude,’ to one object as the model, pattern, or exemplar of another. The sense of it, however, is not so much likeness produced by impression, as a resemblance consisting of imitation or comparison. As it exists in this verse, it is true, it is intensive, having in composition with it a preposition which adds to its strength. In this form, it does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament; but, in its usual state, it is often to be found. Let us examine it, then, in its occurrences in other places, and see how it will there sustain the meaning of identification. In them its sense is substantially the same as here,—the only difference being, that, as used in reference to Melchizedek, it is intensive, or affirms the likeness to have been very close and striking.

‘And he said, Whereunto *shall we liken* the kingdom of God? and with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed.’† ‘Therefore whosoever heareth these

* Heb. vil. 3.

† απομω.

‡ Mark iv. 30, 31.

sayings of mine, and doeth them, *I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock.** ‘And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying, The gods are come down to us *in the likeness of men.*’† ‘Wherefore, in all things, it behoved him to be *made like unto his brethren.*’‡

After reading these passages, is it still thought that Melchizedek's having been ‘*made like unto the Son of God,*’ means that he was the Son of God? If so, it remains with the persons who cherish the idea to believe, upon the same grounds, such new doctrines as these,—The kingdom of God is a grain of mustard seed, The man who does Christ's sayings is an architect who builds his houses upon good foundations, The people of Lystra thought that gods were men, and The Redeemer personally was his brethren.

VI. *If Christ was Melchizedek, the antitype must have existed before that which prefigured it.*

Aaron and his successors were the special and divinely appointed types of his priestly character. They and their services are repeatedly called ‘*shadows of good things to come.*’ In their prefigurative capacity, it was universally believed, and believed on scriptural grounds, that the priest was yet to arise whose performances their ministrations symbolized. Those for whom they officiated were uniformly taught to *look forward*, and to think of the efficient High Priest for men under the name of ‘*he that cometh.*’ The whole machinery of typification, in fact, moved forward on the idea that the priestly mediator of man had never yet made an official appearance.

Is it to be thought, then, that, after all, the whole of this prefiguration was but a postfiguration, that, notwithstanding the fond idea of ‘*things to come,*’ Christ had previously made priestly appearances and had actually performed sacerdotal work, that, before the type had even been constructed, the antitype had really officiated for Abraham, and that thus the entire Levitical priesthood was practically but a species of farce? After it, indeed, the priest with whom it was concerned would appear; but before it also, it seems, he had arisen. Having sustained the character and performed the services of a priest long before the Sinaitic

* Matt. vii. 24.

† Acts xiv. 11.

‡ Heb. ii. 17.

legislation, it was, to say the least of it, but solemn mockery then to institute symbols of him as a priest who had not yet appeared. What would we think of a type of his priesthood existing now, or at any period since his incarnation and death? Yet this would be as reasonable as, upon the supposition of those who identify him and Melchizedek, the Levitical priesthood was during the Jewish dispensation. The construction of a type after the anti-type has arisen, is just as senseless and ridiculous a transaction as the utterance of a prophecy years after the events which it predicts had transpired.

VII. If Christ was Melchizedek, Paul's argument with the Hebrews, respecting the imperfection of the priesthood of Aaron, is unmeaning and pointless.

The whole of it rests on the assumption, that the Saviour's priesthood began at his incarnation, that, there then having been a change of the priesthood, there must have been also a change of the law, and that, a new and another priest having arisen with the appointment of Jehovah, the former or the Levitical dispensation was abolished as old, infirm, and inefficient.* But if Christ was actually a priest before the rise of the Christian era, the apostle's assumption is unwarranted, his premises false, and his conclusion unsupported. The institution of the New Covenant, he views as an act of God which reflected upon the weakness and unprofitableness of the old. The commencement of the Christian economy,—the thing which all allow to be meant by the New Covenant,—he identifies with the Saviour's susception of sacerdotal prerogatives. This economy, he contends, would never have been established, nor would a new priesthood have been permitted to arise, had the former dispensation and the priesthood of Aaron been efficient in their services. He hence arrives at his conclusion, that, on account of the call and consecration of Christ, and of the consequent alteration in the appointed mediation, the constitution of the Levites was overturned, and the law of their priesthood annulled. 'For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.†

All this, however, if Christ had been Melchizedek, or, what is

* Heb. vii. 11—28.

† Heb. viii. 7.

the same thing, if he had appeared as a priest previous to the legislation from Horeb, is not only inconclusive reasoning, but reasoning which tells the very opposite way from what he intended. Since the force of the argument turns upon the posterior priesthood's evincing the weakness of the anterior, and upon its hence effecting its abolition, the proper conclusion from it would be, not that the Christian priesthood supplanted the Levitical, but that the Levitical abolished the Christian. The first covenant would then not have been the Aaronic, but that of the Saviour. He would have been a priest, and the law of his dispensation would have been legislated, long before Aaron was born. The faulty covenant must therefore have been Christ's, and the second covenant which overthrew it that of Aaron and his descendants. They were priests who arose after the Redeemer. He was not a priest who arose after him. Nor is this all. For,

VIII. *If Christ was a priest in the days of Abraham, or if he and Melchizedek were the same person, he must have appeared at the altar without the materials of either atonement or intercession.*

These, it has been shewn in the course of the preceding Dissertation, are the only functions of a priesthood. Yet neither of them could, in the nature of things, have been discharged by Christ before his incarnation. The victim which he presented to God was, as has already been proved, the divine and human natures united in his person as Immanuel; but this victim he had not, nor could he have had, previous to his birth of the virgin. Destitute of it, he had nothing by which he could expiate sin; and, wanting the materials of atonement, he had not wherewith he might enter the Holiest, and conduct a pleading at the right hand of God. He was thus unable to perform the work, and could not therefore possess the character of a priest.

It may be alleged, indeed, that the only work performed for Abraham was the blessing of him by the King of Salem, and that this does not necessarily imply a ministration either piacular or intercessory. The allegation, however, assumes what is not correct. It is not true that a sacerdotal blessing does not imply advocacy and atonement. It is itself a direct consequence of intercession, and cannot be given without a previous expiation. The imparting of it is subsequent to a sacrificial appearance in the

Holiest, springs from the begun pleading of the High Priest, and supposes the recipient of it to have been already purged, in a particular way, from guilt. What Melchizedek, therefore, performed for Abraham, could not, previous to his incarnation, have been really done by the Saviour. Till then he could not, in a literal manner, either atone, intercede, or pontifically bless. He, consequently, must have been one person, and the King of Salem another.

IX. *Christ was not, in the days of Abraham, a possessor of manhood, and could not, on that account, have been then 'the Priest of the Most High God.'*

Participation of human nature is, in every case, indispensable to a priest. 'Every High Priest is taken from among men.'^a 'Wherefore in all things it behoved Christ to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.'[†] Such language as this teaches, in the most unequivocal way, that, without real manhood, there can be no ministration at the altar.

Nor is it sufficient that there be such a semblance of it manifested by an immaterial being, as will induce spectators to imagine that what they behold is actually human. The High Priest must be 'compassed with infirmity,'[‡] subjected to trials which will produce in his mind an experimental sympathy with his suffering constituents,[§] and placed in such a situation with regard to the divine law as will make him, in point of actual obedience, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.^{||} Yet neither experience of pain, compassment with felt infirmity, nor subordination to the law of God, is, in any respect, compatible with a purely divine nature, or with any thing than real manhood. Christ, before his incarnation, saw, it is true, and unerringly estimated all the sufferings of men; simply in his Godhead, he pities his people, as a father does his children; and, irrespective altogether of his humanity, he is infinite in purity, stamps surpassing grandeur upon the law which he has himself promul-

^a Heb. v. 1. [†] Heb. ii. 17. [‡] Heb. v. 3. [§] Heb. ii. 18.

^{||} Heb. vii. 26.

gated, and continually preserves, vindicates, and displays its excellence as an impress of his own moral character. Yet it was not, nor could it have been, till he became Immanuel, till he assumed human nature into personal connexion with his divinity, that, in an experimental way, he could be touched with a feeling of his people's infirmities, or that obedientially he could be subject to the law, and possess, as 'the servant' of the Father and the mediator of men, an active and sacerdotal holiness. Genuine manhood was hence indispensable to his susception of the priesthood. Since, consequently, this was not possessed by him till his incarnation, he could not, two thousand years before, have been a priest,—he could not have been Melchizedek.

Such are the arguments which persuade us that the King of Salem was not Christ. If allowed their due influence on the mind, they shew that the sentiment we have been opposing is both unwarranted by scripture, and productive of consequences to our views of the Saviour's priesthood at once confused, self-inconsistent, and revolting. Let Melchizedek be regarded as our Lord himself, and his entire character is surrounded with clouds and darkness. Let him, on the other hand, be viewed as simply his type, and, as the last chapter of the preceding Dissertation was intended to shew, he is wrapped in a mantle of living light,—a light brilliantly reflected upon the supremacy, grandeur, perpetuity, and perfection of the Redeemer's pontifical ministrations.

APPEND. II.

THE TIME WHEN CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD COMMENCED.

It is the opinion of some, that Christ was not a priest till his resurrection. The passage, however, which they most frequently quote in support of their doctrine, so far from affording it countenance, virtually affirms it to be incorrect. This is apparent the moment that we read it in connexion with its context. 'Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law.*

The third verse is obviously parenthetical, intended merely to shew, in passing, that, since every High Priest appeared in the Holiest with a sacrifice, Christ displays himself in heaven as a slain victim. Reading it, then, as a parenthesis, and connecting the second verse immediately with the fourth, the apostle's statement is, that, our Lord, as an High Priest, differs, in respect to the sanctuary in which he ministers, from Aaron and his descendants. They officiated *on earth*; but he appears *in heaven*. They served in the *typical* tabernacle; but he ministers in *the true*. When they had expiated sin, they went with the precious blood into a sanctuary which perished; but when he had made atonement, he ascended to 'heavenlies which must retain him till the times of the restitution of all things.' The Aaronites were compelled to return; but Christ was destined to sit down in the Holiest till all his enemies be made his footstool. The former, on this account, officiated in a perishable edifice, while the latter

* Heb. viii. 1-4.

required to enter an house not made with hands, the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. The sanctuaries and the priesthoods were mutually adapted, the typical tabernacle to the prefigurative economy, and the true Holy of Holies to the efficient dispensation,—the perishing temple to the covenant which waxed old, and the abiding sanctuary to that which is well-ordered and everlasting,—the earthly Holiest to priests that died, and the heavenly Holiest to him who is consecrated for evermore. The respective economies, priesthoods, and sanctuaries, were peculiar in their order. The Aaronic could not interchange with the Christian, nor the Christian with the Aaronic. Had the Levites been *in heaven*, they could not have been priests, since they needed to return to the worshippers without: had our Lord been *on earth*, he could not have been a priest, since he required a tabernacle in which he could not permanently remain. Had the former entered the *heavenly* sanctuary, they could not have been priests, seeing there is one ministering in it who is made after the power of an endless life: had the latter entered the *earthly* sanctuary, he could not have been a priest, seeing that in it 'there were priests who ministered according to the law.'

This all will acknowledge to be a correct view of the passage. Yet could any thing more plainly assume the Saviour's priesthood to have begun in our world? It regards his ascension as what was typified by Aaron's entrance of the Holiest, views him as having previous to it performed his piacular work, and hence refers to it as an event subsequent to his priestly consecration. The phrase, 'were he on earth,' standing in the connexion in which it does, is synonymous with either 'had he *remained* on earth,' or 'had he entered the earthly sanctuary,'—senses either of which views him as having been a priest in our world. The entrance of heaven was an act in which a priesthood could not begin, but one in which the first function of it was in the course of being discharged. It was subsequent to the piacular part of ministration, preceded the purification of the heavenlies, and intervened between the expiatory and the propitiatory departments of atonement. Regarding, therefore, the sacerdotal work as already in the course of accomplishment, the passage which refers to it affirms our Lord to have been previously a priest, or a priest on earth.

The notion, then, we allude to, receives no support from this passage, but the contrary. Nor is it better vindicated by the appeal which some of its partizans make to Paul's address at Antioch. 'We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us his children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day I have begotten thee.*

The words quoted by the apostle are the words of Christ's priestly consecration. Hence is it alleged that Paul's having used them in reference to his resurrection, is proof that, in that event, he was set apart to the sacerdotal office. As well, however, might the argument be advanced to prove that the resurrection was the commencement of his Sonship. It is of the Sonship that the words of the quotation directly speak. They not only refer to it, but, in the phrase 'I have begotten thee,' they shew in what it consists. If, therefore, the application of them to the resurrection shews, that, when viewed as the Saviour's priestly call, they affirm his priesthood not to have begun till he arose from the dead, it shews with equal certainty, that, when regarded as the announcement of his Sonship, they declare that not till then was he the Son of God,—that, while on earth, he was no more a Son than a priest. Yet this is an idea which neither the holders of the eternal Sonship nor those who believe in the mediatorial will imbibe,—the former viewing it as having been from everlasting, and the latter regarding it as having commenced at his incarnation.

The passage in Acts is hence to be understood not as settling *the time* but as affirming *the reality* of both the Sonship and the priesthood. The words, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,' described the character of Christ both as the Son of God and as a divinely appointed High Priest for men. Prophetically recorded in the second Psalm, they were a *promise*, both that he should appear as 'the Son of the Most High,' and that, when he appeared, he should sustain a sacerdotal character. This promise God *fulfilled* or brought to its ultimate accomplishment, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. He was then 'justified by the Spirit.† The event at once

* Acts xiii. 32, 33.

† 1 Tim. iii. 16.

attested his divinity, and proved the reality, acceptance, and efficiency of his High-priesthood. 'He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.'^{*} He was the Son before; but his Sonship was then powerfully or miraculously attested. Previously, upon the same principle, he was a priest; and then was the power of his priestly character approved. Final and conclusive evidence was given that, in respect both to the announcement of Sonship and to a divine call to the priesthood, truth was spoken in the prophecy, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' 'The promise,' consequently, which the words conveyed was *fulfilled*, proof was furnished of its faithfulness, every thing respecting it was set at rest, when the Redeemer was raised from the dead.

This passage, then, as well as the other, gives no countenance to the idea which it is adduced to vindicate. Both, on the contrary, make a most evident assumption, that our Lord's priesthood commenced before his death on the Cross, or at his birth of the virgin. The arguments founded on them are the only noticeable ones which we are aware of being used. Having, therefore, shewn them to be pointless, it may not be amiss to place two or three others in their stead which satisfactorily prove, we apprehend, the opposite doctrine. In stating these, we remark that

I. If Christ's Priesthood did not commence at his Incarnation, it was not he who made atonement.

Expiation is as truly a priestly function as intercession. It was a work which began to be accomplished at the Redeemer's birth, and which continued to be executed till his death. Now who, we ask, was the priest who performed it? It is no reply to say that Jesus was the victim. In law, the victim is one thing, and the sacerdotal offerer is another. The Saviour, it is true, is both offering and priest. He is more—he is also a prophet and a king—he combines a variety of characters in his single person. Yet these, when viewed legally or abstractly, are all perfectly distinct. His prophetic properties are not his kingly, nor are his kingly

^{*} Rom. i. 4.

his prophetic. His sacrificial qualities, in the same way, are different from his sacerdotal. As a priest, he had one sphere, and, as a victim, he had another.

Who, then, we again ask, was the priest who sacrificed our Lord? Was it the Father? Impossible. Was it Pilate? Incredible. Was it the Jews? Revolting. Was it no one? No. It was himself. 'I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*' Christ thus sacrificed himself. He performed upon himself the acts of devotion, imputation, immolation, and oblation. He laid down his own life, and himself shed his blood as an atonement for sin. Was not this being a priest on earth?

II. *If Christ was not a Priest on earth, Aaron could not have been a Priest, either in the Holy Place, or in the Court of the Tabernacle.*

The Holiest of all in the Jewish sanctuary, was a type of heaven, or of the place in which the Saviour conducts his intercession. Aaron's entrance to it, was symbolical of our Lord's ascension. The whole of his ministrations, in fact, on the great day of atonement, were prefigurative, not merely of the various parts, but of the order, succession, and mutual dependencies of the Redeemer's sacerdotal services. What was done previous to the entrance of the Holy of Holies, referred to what Christ accomplished in our world; and what was done subsequent to it, pointed to his officiations in heaven. The former typified his expiation, and the latter prefigured his intercession.

Now if the one class of services were as truly typical as the other, Aaron must have sustained a character in the performance of both which was designed, in each of the departments, to be emblematic of the Saviour's. If he was a priest before he appeared at the mercy-seat,—if he was so while he ministered in the Court of the Tabernacle and in the Holy Place,—if he was so in the acts of slaughtering the goat of the Lord, of confessing sin over the scape-goat, and of expiating iniquity with both,—if he

*John x. 17, 18.

was a priest then,—and that he was is often and most plainly declared in the word of God ;* we must, unless all correspondence between type and antitype be utterly destroyed, regard Christ as having been a priest on earth, as having executed in our world the long series of priestly actions which were prefigured by the first department of the annual atonement of the Jews, and as having received his official consecration even before these were performed. Deny that he was a priest till his resurrection : Aaron, upon the same principle, was not a priest till he left the altar to approach the Shechinah. Deny that Christ was called till after his death : Aaron must not have been installed till he was entering the Holiest. Affirm that Jesus was consecrated with his own blood : Aaron must have been set apart by the blood of propitiation which he carried to the mercy-seat. Believe that the Saviour did not act as a priest in laying down his life : Aaron performed no sacerdotal work when he slew the goat of the Lord for an expiation. Deny, in short, that Christ was a priest on earth : no priestly service whatever must have been done either in the Holy Place, or in the Court of the Tabernacle. Such are but a few of the consequences which flow from this doctrine,—consequences which involve a series of flat contradictions of the Bible, which break to shivers a large portion of the Mosaic types of the Redeemer's work, and which virtually disjoin the function of expiation from a priesthood.

III. *Christ is distinctly called a Priest in respect to what he performed on earth.*

This is done in more places than one. In a multitude of passages, it is done by implication ; and, in several, it is done directly. We shall merely look at one or two of the latter.

First.—‘ When he cometh into the world, he saith, Lo I come to do thy will O God. By the which will, we have atonement made for us through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.† Here the susception of both a sacrificial and a sacerdotal character is identified, in point of time, with Christ's coming into the world. In the context, he is compared not only, in regard to his properties as a victim, with the sacrifices of the

* Lev. xvi. 1—34.

† Heb. x. 5, 9, 10.

Jews, but also, in respect to his priestly ministrations, with the sacerdotal services of the Levites. They, as priests, offered victims which could never take away sins; but he, in the same character, presented a sacrifice which made conclusive expiation. Let this be denied as the essence of the comparison; and the whole passage will then be divested of meaning. It, consequently, assumes him to have been as truly a real priest on earth, as the Levites were prefigurative priests in their officiations in the Holy Place.

Second.—'And every Priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins; but this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.* The word 'man,' in this passage, has nothing corresponding to it in the original. According to every law of either Greek or English composition, the pronoun 'this,' as it is the nominative of a clause antithetical to one which precedes it, must take for its noun the nominative of the other member of the antithesis. This is the word 'priest' with which the sentence is introduced. Christ *as a priest* is compared, not with the pontifical, but with the common Levites. Every priest among them stood ministering daily, but *this priest* offered one sacrifice once for all. The Saviour's priesthood is hence declared to have been typified by the daily ministration which was all conducted in the Holy Place and had no concern with the Holiest of all; and Christ himself is called 'a priest' in reference to work which he performed in our world,—that work which was prefigured by the daily services of the ordinary Levitical officiates. Previous, therefore, to his entering heaven, or, in other words, *on earth*, he sustained the character, executed the ministrations, and bore the name of a priest.

Third.—'In all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.† Could language more plain than this be found to contemporize Christ's High-priesthood with his incarnation? He became like unto his brethren, or he assumed human nature to be an High Priest. He was an High Priest in making reconciliation for sin. Was it in his resurrection that he became

* Heb. x. 11, 12.

† Heb. ii. 17.

like his brethren? Was it after he rose from the dead that he expiated sin? No: it was on earth. On earth, therefore, or from his birth of the virgin, he was a priest.

Arguments in support of the doctrine for which we contend might be multiplied. What we have advanced, however, are sufficient. Let these be allowed their proper weight,—let the confusion, the worse than confusion, which the opposite doctrine creates, be properly considered,—especially let it be remembered that the idea of our Lord's not having been a priest till his resurrection affirms that the Christian atonement was not made by the High Priest of our profession, affirms that, in whatever way it was executed, it was not performed by Christ as a priest,—let especially this consequence of the doctrine be recollected; and the whole system of a merely after-resurrection priesthood will immediately be abandoned as not less absurd than unscriptural,—as a creed which renders the expiation of our Redeemer, that great work on which all the hopes of the justified rest, a performance perfectly unmeaning, or at best, unintelligible,—a work which both was and was not performed by him,—which was executed by him as a victim, but yet was independent of him as a priest.

APPEND. III.

THE ALTAR ON WHICH CHRIST WAS OFFERED.

Different opinions are entertained respecting the altar on which our Lord was sacrificed. The most generally received view is as having been either the Cross or his divine nature. Both opinions have been warmly advocated by different classes of theologians. These have made mutual attacks upon the creeds which they respectively hold, and have each appealed for support to the sacred record. That both doctrines are wrong, however, seems not to have occurred to either of the parties. Yet that they are so, appears, we apprehend, not merely from the implicit testimony of the Bible, but also from the pernicious consequences which are involved in both the one tenet and the other.

As to the opinion that Christ's Cross was his altar,—the only arguments which we are aware of being urged on its behalf, are, that the Saviour's sacrifice having been material, it must have been offered upon a material altar, that, since he suffered 'without the gate,' he must have been sacrificially immolated on Mount Calvary, and that, in correspondence with the use of wood in the consumption of every Jewish victim, he required to be presented on an altar of timber or on a tree.

It is granted that the altar was material. Yet what does the concession avail? Was there nothing material but the Cross? Had Christ been offered in the manger, on the sea, or in the clouds, at his birth, during his life-time, or at his ascension, he would still have been presented on something material. The adaptation, in fact, between the sacrifice and the altar, consisted, not in materiality, but in the nature of the penalty endured. The shape, position, size, and materials of the Jewish altar, were not

designed to form a correspondence to the animal nature of the victims. This, in strict language, they could not do. They were intended merely to constitute a fitness of place, and form and opportunity for inflicting slaughter and consumption upon the sacrifices. 'Cutting off from among the people' was the penalty to be endured; and this could most befittingly be undergone by an animal upon the kind of altar at which the Levites ministered. Its size was of proper capacity to admit the laying upon it of the largest victims; its composition of brass prevented it from being consumed with the fire; its horns were a convenient fixture for the cords which bound the sacrifice; its neighbourhood to the sanctuary formed a beautiful connexion of it with the services in the Holiest; and its sloping ascent afforded a suitable mode of access to the officiates. In every way, indeed, it possessed a minute fitness to the execution of that penalty which the victims were destined to endure. But where was the similar adaptation, or rather where was the adaptation at all, between the Cross of the Saviour, and the various departments of that punishment which was undergone by him? That there was a fitness in it for the infliction of an ignominious death, is indisputable. This, however, was but a part of the curse. Other ingredients of it were rejection by men, temptation by devils, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, fightings without and fears within, for a series of years. Was the Cross a fit place for enduring these? or was it upon the Cross that the Redeemer underwent them? In itself, therefore, that Cross could not have been his altar.

But Christ, we are reminded, is said to have 'suffered without the gate;' and this, it is alleged, is equivalent to affirming that he was immolated on Calvary. Let us look at the passage, however, and see whether this be really what it means. 'For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might make atonement for the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*' Christ is here compared to the holocausts. These were consumed, not in the camp or in Jerusalem, but in the open fields. Their bodies were burned without the gate; and their blood was carried into the sanctuary.

* Heb. xiii. 11, 12.

In both parts of the service in which they were sacrificed, they were the types of the Saviour. Like them, he was not slaughtered in the Temple or in the heavenly itself, but in a place beyond its precincts; yet, after he had been immolated, his blood was conveyed to the Holiest of all. With what sanctuary, then, did the scene of his mactation stand connected? Was it the sanctuary in the literal Jerusalem, or that in the spiritual? It was in heaven assuredly,—in a ‘city which is to come.’ Of this the Temple on Mount Zion was the shadow, while the whole of Jerusalem was a type of the entire heavenly world. It was, consequently, without the gate, not of the metropolis of Judea, but of the celestial city which it symbolized, that Paul represents our Lord as having suffered.

It is only by thus understanding him, that we can see either sense or force in the inference which he immediately draws. ‘Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp bearing his reproach; for here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.’* ‘Without the gate’ and ‘without the camp’ are phrases which mean the same thing, the one alluding to the days of the Temple, and the other referring to those of the Tabernacle.

Whatever the one denotes, must be imported by the other. Both, in the apostle’s use of them, must be either literal or figurative. Understood literally, they are unintelligible. They teach, indeed, that Calvary—not the Cross—was Christ’s altar; but they teach, at the same time, that all believers ought to rally round the place of skulls, to remain there, and there to bear the Saviour’s reproach. The faithful are to abide on that Mount, because they have no continuing city—they are to go thither, though to most the journey is impossible—they are in thousands to repair to that little hill—there are they to continue exposed to the taunts of their persecutors! Is this sense? Or, if it be, is it not such sense as is hatched in Rome? For what are the people of God to go to Mount Calvary? To do penance? To perform a crusade? To befool themselves in attempting to crowd millions upon a hillock which now forms the site of a Mahommedan mosque?

Such is the nonsense which a literal interpretation of the apostle’s language originates. Let that language, however, be understood figuratively; and the whole statement is then consistent and

* Heb. xiii. 13, 14.

powerful. Jerusalem, containing the sanctuary, was the type of heaven. The services of sacrificing the holocaust prefigured the mode in which the Redeemer made atonement. He hence first suffered *on earth*, and then conveyed his blood to the celestial Holiest. *On earth*, therefore, or without the gate of the heavenly City, let believers go forth bearing their Lord's reproach, remembering that in the wilderness, or without the camp, they have no permanent abode, and setting their affections on things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

This passage, then, even if understood literally, proves Christ's altar to have been, not his Cross, but Mount Calvary; and, if interpreted consistently with Paul's practical application of it, shews that altar, without limitation to any spot, to have been simply *the earth*.

Nor is the idea that the Cross was the altar better vindicated by the only other argument which is employed for its support,—that, in correspondence with the use of wood in the consumption of the Jewish victims, Christ required to be sacrificed on a tree. The wood, it is to be remembered, was not the altar: it was merely laid upon it as fuel to consume the animal. Even, therefore, were the consequence alleged to result from the use of it conceded, the conclusion would be, not that the Cross itself was the Saviour's altar, but that it was merely laid upon it as an instrument of consumption. It might hence, on the ground of it, be fairly contended, either that the altar was the earth in general, or that it was particularly Mount Calvary.

But is it in this trifling manner that the types are to be explained? Because wood was used in consuming a Jewish sacrifice, therefore Christ required to be immolated on timber! Prosecute this mode of reasoning; and to what futilities and absurdities would it conduct us! It would shew that *brass* and not wood should have composed the Christian altar, that the true propitiatory should have had some alliance to *shittim*-wood, that the heavenly sanctuary is enriched with literal gold, that certain gums are burnt as incense in performing intercession, and that, in fact, the whole heavenly things themselves are as carnal as were their patterns.

The notion, then, of the Cross having been the altar, is more caricatured than vindicated by the arguments which are resorted to for supporting it. In itself, the idea is harmless, and scarcely

perhaps merits a serious refutation. It is the mere inconsistency of it with a correct view of what constituted our Lord's sacrifice, that has led us to expose it. It necessarily confines the atonement to the Saviour's mere crucifixion. Regarding nothing but the Cross as his altar, it cannot, if consistent with itself, include in his sacrifice either his active obedience, the general sufferings of his life, or his agony in the garden. It may view these as having constituted his exemplification of patience, subjection, and other features of moral excellence; but it cannot regard them as having been, along with his death, materials of his expiation. Chiefly on this account it is, that the doctrine is untenable, that we charge it with entailing pernicious consequences, and that necessity exists for expelling it from a scriptural view of Christ's peculiar work.

Still stronger language than this, however, may be used against the other doctrine respecting the Christian altar,—that doctrine which views the altar as having been our Lord's divine nature,—a doctrine extensively believed, but seldom endeavoured to be proved,—a doctrine ruinous to every correct or consistent idea of either the atonement or the Saviour's person, virtually regarding the hypostatical union as having been destroyed previous to his being sacrificed, declaring the victim which he offered to have been simply his humanity, and affirming the moral worth of his expiation either not to have been derived from the divinity at all, or to have accrued, not from the properties of the sacrifice, but from the qualities of the altar.

This opinion is sufficiently extravagant. Yet attempts have been made to gain it countenance from the language, though of but one passage, of the Bible. 'Ye fools and blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift.'* This proves, say some, that Christ's humanity, as the great gift or true sacrificial victim, was sanctified or ennobled and rendered peculiarly effective, by the influence of the altar or of the divine nature on which it was offered.

Some such thing as this perhaps might be proved by it, if the passage had any reference to the subject. No such reference, however, does it contain. It speaks, not of *sacrifices* but of *gifts*,

—things most essentially different. Sacrifices were immolated animals; but gifts were composed of oil and wine, flour and similar substances. The victims used in the former were *sanctified* or set apart when they were brought to the door of the Tabernacle; but the inanimate materials employed in the latter were set apart or *sanctified* only when laid upon the altar. Hence the assertion, 'the altar sanctifieth, devoteth, or consecrateth the gift.' But was it in this way that a sacrifice was sanctified? No. In respect to this, the principle was completely reversed,—the altar not sanctifying the sacrifice, but the sacrifice sanctifying the altar. 'And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin-offering for atonement; and thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it to sanctify it. Seven days shalt thou make an atonement for the altar, and it shall be an altar most holy.'* Thus, in regard to sacrifices, the altar itself required to be sanctified,—sanctified seven days,—and sanctified with the blood of an expiatory victim. The idea that our Lord's altar was his Godhead, is hence completely put to flight.

The doctrine must view Christ as having been immolated either through life, or not until his crucifixion. If it embrace the former alternative, it affirms the hypostatical union never to have been rightly formed; and, if the latter, it both declares the union to have been destroyed immediately before his death, and flatly contradicts our Lord's declaration that the Father sanctified and sent him into the world.† The Redeemer here affirms himself to have been set apart in the very act of his incarnation,—to have been sanctified, not by being laid upon the altar, but by the official designation of him to the work which he was to perform. He could not, consequently, have been sanctified by his divine nature. This would have been the sacrifice sanctifying itself. As a victim, no less than as a priest, he was Immanuel. God manifest in the flesh, was the Lamb which bore away the sins of the world. Admit this, and, by no possibility, could the divine nature have been his altar: deny it, and fellowship is virtually declared with Nestorians,—with those who believe the Saviour's Godhead and manhood to have been, in respect to personality, wholly united.

* Exod. xxix. 36, 37.

† John x. 36.

Having, then, set aside the doctrines to which we have been referring, on what, it may be asked, are we now to regard our Lord as having been sacrificed? His altar, we reply, seems to have been simply *the earth*. This view, we conceive, is at once supported by Scripture, thoroughly self-consistent with correct ideas of his piacular work, and, in as far as we can see, is unencumbered with any hurtful consequences to the general system of divine truth. A few considerations, and only a few, we will offer for its vindication.

I. *It is the only idea of Christ's Altar which can harmonize with the fact of his having been Immolated from his Incarnation to his Death.*

Proof, in the course of the preceding work, has been advanced, that his atonement was obediential, that the first, as well as the last pain which he felt in our world was expiatory, that his incarnation and his assumption of a sacrificial character were contemporaneous, and that, from the time of his having been made under the law till the moment when he expired, he was sustaining man's penalty,—doctrines not one of which can be true, unless he be regarded as having, throughout the whole of his lifetime in our world, lain sacrificially upon the altar. Yet on what, during that prolonged period, can he be viewed as having lain, except upon the earth? Our world as such, and not any one spot of it or any particular object upon it, was that on which he was placed, while he underwent all the intermediate ills between the stable and Golgotha. This, therefore, without limitation to any places of it but those which he occupied, must have been the altar on which he suffered.

II. *The Earth was the only Altar suited to the infliction upon him of the curse which he endured.*

This did not consist of mere death, else it might all have been undergone upon the Cross; nor was it constituted, in addition to this, by the withdrawal of God's complacency, for then it would have been endured conjointly in Gethsemane, and in the place of skulls. It embodied, besides both of these ingredients, a

protracted exposure to physical evil,—evil composed of every variety of pain, privation, and sorrow, from men, from devils, and from the perturbed and accursed state of the very soil of our world. It was hence a curse to the endurance of which nothing but our mere earth was adapted. Only in the world it was, as on an altar, that our Lord could undergo its various inflictions, and, by the sustainment of it, bear away the sins of men.

III. *The Altar must have been such that it required to be expiated.*

This is shewn from a passage already quoted.* Yet no reason can be alleged why the Cross, the divine nature, or any thing else, except the earth, supposed to have been the altar, needed to have such a service performed on its behalf. In regard to the world, however, such a reason is obvious. On this, as well as on men, and in connexion with their sinfulness, the divine curse was made to rest at his fall. ‘Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.’† In consequence of this curse, the earth, before truth could spring out of it, or previous to its being a consecrated altar, required to be sanctified. Expiation was made for it, or an adequate cleansing of it was effected, at the moment of our Lord’s consecration. It was sanctified by his mere presence, and became an appropriate altar simply by his appearance upon its surface. By him, as a sin-offering, atonement was made for it, the curse resting upon it removed, and an anointing and sanctification for it accomplished. Thus, in respect to the earth, did the sacrifice sanctify the altar. The altar and the earth, therefore, must have been identical.

IV. *The position of our world with regard to Heaven, forms an exact correspondence to that of the Jewish Altar with respect to the Sanctuary.*

The Levitical altar stood neither in the Holiest nor in the Holy Place, but in the court of the Tabernacle. The Holiest was the type of heaven, or of the sanctuary in which Christ intercedes; the Holy Place was the symbol of the Church in the present state,

* Exod. xxix. 36, 37.

† Gen. iii. 17, 18.

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or of believers as chosen out of the world, and 'come to Mount Zion;' and the court of the Tabernacle represented the earth in its native condition, or that state in which men are, previous to the expiatory remission of their sins. While sin was being atoned for, the multitude waited without; but after it was expiated, they went up from the outer court, entered the holy place, and passed into the Holy of Holies. This, the Jews, it is true, did not do literally; yet they did it legally or in law, and thus symbolized the raising up of believers with Christ, and their sitting down with him in the heavenlies. The High Priest, in the same way, first slaughtered the bullock in the court and consumed the devoted parts of it on the altar; and, after having there slain the goat of the Lord, he went up through the first sanctuary into the Holiest, and appeared before the Shechinah. The correspondence was hence most exact between the three apartments of the Temple on the one hand, and the native earth, the Church in the world, and the heavenly sanctuary, on the other.

Now in all these states did Christ, in performing the successive parts of his work, exist. He first, as on an altar, sacrificed himself on earth, pointed to by the Court of the Tabernacle; he then sojourned forty days exclusively with his disciples, and unsubjected to any penal inflictions, or he passed that period in the condition which was symbolized by the Holy Place, which intervenes between deliverance from the curse and entrance to glory, and in which his people are placed in the world; and he finally entered the true heavenlies, there to perform whatever was prefigured by Aaron's appearance in the Holiest of all. Nothing, consequently, can be plainer than that in the outer court, or on the common earth, he was sacrificially immolated,—nothing more manifest than that our world as such, or in its native state, was his altar.

APPEND. IV.

WHY CHRIST AS A PRIEST REQUIRED TO SUFFER.

In Heb. ii. 10—18, iv. 15, 16, and v. 1—3,—passages to which we have frequently referred,—it is affirmed that Christ, as a priest, required to be encompassed with infirmity, that, without his having suffered, he could not have rightly served at the altar, and that his experimentally acquired capacity of sympathizing with his afflicted constituents, is a special and an important property of his sacerdotal character.

A leading reason of all this lies, we apprehend, in the necessity there was for minutely adapting a priesthood for man to the peculiarities of our circumstances and nature. It needed, in order to its efficiency, to draw forth upon itself the firm confidence of those for whom its services were performed; and hence required to assume those characters by which this would be most fully inspired in their minds.

Now such is the constitution of man that, when we bend beneath trials, and go in search of those who may yield us solace and alleviate or remove our calamities, we can place reliance only on individuals who, in addition to a sauvity of disposition, possess a readiness, in virtue of their having themselves been surrounded with affliction, to afford succour to the distressed. From the austere, the stern, and the wrathful, we can ask neither the pardon of injuries we have done them, the stretching forth of a compassionate hand to sustain us amidst our cares, nor the conferment of those aids which might deliver us from our embarrassments. Their obtuseness of feeling, the coldness with which they listen to the tale of suffering, the rigid severity of their demands for satisfaction from an offender or payment from a debtor, the angry frown which lowers upon the urging of an extenuating plea,

the iron-formed nerves which admit not of a solitary thrill of pity for the weeping suppliant, the entire aspect of self-indulgence, indifference to others, lordly pomp, and bitter inattention to the beseeching voice of misery,—these remand away every wretch and suppliant, and every debtor and offender from their presence, rouse an indignant emotion in their hearts, and originate a determination rather to scorn their presence, to deride their wrath, and to dare them to their worst, than again to place themselves at their mercy.

The Israelites, at one time, argued themselves into such a persuasion of God's want of compassion, as made them thenceforth abandon the thought of ever re-approaching his presence. The misconception of him they formed, paralyzed their confidence, and filled them alternately with enmity and despair. 'And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the Tabernacle of the Lord shall die. Shall we be consumed with dying?'* They imagined his procedure to be so exclusively vindictive, so stern and uncompassionate, that there 'was no profit if they should pray to him;† and, under a conviction that they had committed many sins which he would never pardon, they resolved never again to draw near his tabernacle.

The same principle, too, produced all the slothfulness, inaction, and indifference to his master's will, of the servant in the parable. He viewed him as a man who made the most unreasonable demands upon the exertions of those whom he employed, who had no power of pitying their misgivings or of calculating the force of those temptations which might allure them to delinquency; and who, if they should not accomplish an amount of profitable performance utterly beyond the capacities of common men, would visit them with fell inflictions of his displeasure. Hence did his servant, imagining this to be his character, surrender himself to a total unconcern respecting the performing of his duties, and, in utter hopelessness of being able to please his crab-hearted superior, determined to be altogether idle. 'Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth.‡

* Numb. xvii. 12, 13. † Job xxi. 15. ‡ Matt. xxv. 24, 25.

Fear and distrust are thus the feelings which natively spring up in the mind of an inferior, when he conceives his superior to be influenced by a vigorous and incompassionate disposition. The imagination which creates them may, as in the case of the Israelites and of the parabolic servant, be without foundation; yet even then it has all the power of a reality. The feelings are as strong and commanding as though the superior's character were really as stern as it is imagined. Hence if even when unwarranted they are so influential, the energy with which they operate must permanently ruin the very power of confidence, and must acquire an ascendancy in the mind altogether irresistible, when it springs from a correctly formed estimate of character, and is perpetually confirmed and invigorated by fresh displays of its severity.

A persuasion, on the other hand, that a superior is mild, tender, and sympathizing towards the meanest under him who is involved in trouble or seduced by guileful allurements, uniformly originates the opposite feelings of reliance and complacency. Under its influence, a servant will be cheerful and assiduous in his obedience, a sufferer magnanimous in his trials, and vigorous in the hope of expected sympathy, and an offender hearty in the acknowledgment of his errors, penitential in his supplications for pardon, and earnestly desirous for a reformation of his conduct. Hence, whenever the Divine Being expostulates with his erring creatures, he exhibits himself as tender in compassion, slow to wrath, rich in mercy, and unwilling that the ungodly should perish. These are the attributes which inspire their faith, and ignite a genuine repentance. The tenderness of the Father elates the heart of the returning prodigal.

It appears, then, to be a fixed law in our fallen nature, that confidence can exist only toward the compassionate. There was, hence, the highest necessity for our Lord, not only manifesting the utmost tenderness for his 'little flock,' but for his having placed himself in circumstances the most befitting for impressing upon their minds a settled conviction of his possessing it. His work for them is not perfected when he has brought them from death to life. Justification is but the commencement of their practical redemption, and leaves them still surrounded with numerous evils. Often are they led by their remaining depravity into the commission of grievous iniquities. While here, they will always be, in some degree, 'ignorant.' Frequently will

they perpetrate sins which, though not anathematizing, require the exercise of divine mercy. Often will they be inveigled 'out of the way,' and need to be restored to the path of rectitude by the shepherd and bishop of their souls.* While their errors multiply, their sorrows increase,—sorrows which might settle into something worse than despondency were the Saviour to meet them, amidst their aberrations, with nothing but frowning and austerity. Where, when they are oppressed with conscious sinfulness and misery, could they look for 'an eye to pity them or a hand to help,' if the angel of God's presence should refuse to be 'afflicted in their afflictions?' Should he break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax, or should he, instead of taking it up in his arms and restoring it to the green pastures, punish with rods and severely correct every straying lamb, the whole flock would soon regard him with dread, and, when they had been guilty of wandering, would be filled, at his appearance, with unmingled tremor and apprehension. But since, on the other hand, 'he feeds his flock like a shepherd, gathers the lambs in his arms, carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young,'† they rejoice when they see him making his way toward them amidst their aberrations, and regard the sound of his voice 'as ointment poured forth.'‡ While they perpetually need mercy and grace to help, they have not such an High Priest as cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Hence are they encouraged to come with boldness to the throne of grace where all their needs will be supplied.

The necessity of a High Priest's compassment with infirmity, in order to secure the confidence and complacency of his people, is thus most apparent. Nor, if we reflect on the numberless provocations they are continually offering him, will there appear to be less need in order to the preservation of his own care and guardianship for the redeemed. Were he destitute of such an experimental sympathy as empowers him to estimate from experience the force of those temptations which carry them away, to cherish an anxious care for their deliverance from every besetting sin, and to ply his ministrations for them in spite of all their bitter ingratitude, their sad misgivings, and their grievous inattention to himself, he might

* Heb. iv. 16. and v. 3. Ps. xxiii. 2. and lxxxix. 30—33.

† Isa. xl. 11.

Cant. i. 3.

be led only to 'mark their iniquities,' to manifest toward them unmingled feelings of displeasure, and finally to abandon them to the consequences of their waywardness. 'Moses also was displeased, and said unto the Lord, Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom as a nursing-father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.'*

The Israelites forgot all the mighty deliverances which had been wrought in their exodus from bondage. They lusted after the flesh-pots of Egypt, repined under their privations in the wilderness, and scouted the promise of entering into the land flowing with milk and honey. Moses hence regarded them as insulting both Jehovah and himself, lost all his former tenderness, and denounced the whole multitude as rebels. 'Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock?'† He had not patience to recollect all the trying calamities which were the immediate cause of their murmurings. He thought more upon the offence committed against himself than upon the promotion of their well-being. He reflected not that their repining was as much their calamity as their sin. He imagined himself to have no such intimate connexion with them or personal interest in their happiness, as would counterbalance the injuries he received from them. He therefore resolved to relinquish his charge of them, and chose rather to be stript of his official character and divested of life itself, than to continue with a people so 'ignorant and erring.' 'If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand.'‡ 'I will not feed you. That that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.'§

Such is the manner of men. The character and conduct of an High Priest, however, must be totally different. Were he to treat his erring people with the same asperity, he would entirely counteract the ends of his mediation. Believers err with such frequency and aggravation that were Christ's pity not to surpass his displeasure he would soon 'spue them every one out of his

* Numb. xi. 10—14.

† Numb. xx. 10.

‡ Numb. xi. 15.

§ Zech. xi. 9.

mouth.' Often do they rebel against the salutary and rigid restraints of his word and Spirit. Their present enjoyments frequently become loathsome, dull, heavy, and unsatisfactory. Their hearts beat lustingly for the flesh-pots of the world. The prospect of heaven ceases to overcome the tedium and the toil of their dreary career through the vale of tears. Conduct like all this, however, is never produced but as the result of sore temptations and dreadful onsets of Satan. Were the Saviour, therefore, unable to estimate the power and the delusiveness of these,—were he unable to feel and to display a melting pity for his people on account of the imperfections through the medium of which their temptations operate, and firmly to fix his regards upon the completion of the deliverance he has begun for them, he might, like Moses, be so provoked with their delinquencies as to meditate an abandonment of them to their fate. His susceptibility of personal provocation might thus be utterly subversive of the very design for which his priestly character was assumed,—a design which includes both the removal of their guilt by expiation, and an extermination of their depravity by a prolonged course of intercession,—the insuring of both their deliverance from Egypt, and their safe guidance to the land of Canaan. In their journeyings, they may often murmur and rebel; yet they must not be left in the desert, but be safely conveyed to 'the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.' There must be nothing, therefore, in the disposition of their High Priest which might produce such angry excitements at their errors, as would prevent his going the whole way before them. He must, on the other hand, possess all the pity which will lead him to commiserate them amidst every divergency, to give them prompt assistance when they fall into sin, and to carry them in his arms to the land of rest. Such is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. 'For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction, he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity, he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. Where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us

not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting.*

The indispensability of a High Priest's having compassion for the ignorant, and for them that are out of the way, is thus manifest whether we view it in connexion with the cherishing of their confidence, or with the prevention of his own provocation. Yet such a power of compassion could not have been possessed by the Saviour, had he not himself been encompassed with physical infirmity, exposed to the temptations which assail and sometimes overcome his people, and depressed with all the kinds of suffering which embitter their existence on earth. 'In all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that he himself hath suffered being tried, he is able to succour them that are tried. †

The very same law in our nature which makes us shrink from seeking relief, in an hour of distress, from a man of hard-heartedness, creates a distrust in any one's power to afford it who has not himself been afflicted with such or the same calamities as our own. We expect the kindliness and the flow of compassion to be proportioned to the number and intensity of the sufferings he has personally endured. Nor is the principle on which the expectation rests unreasonable. The men who have had few distressful allotments of providence, who have seldom been assailed with personal and relative distress, and who have never experienced the torturing cares and the privations which result from lordly oppression and starving penury, are not the persons who can commiserate the condition of the suffering poor, listen with affectionate concern to the tale of wretchedness, or minister with adequate tenderness and liberality to the many necessities of the desolate. They are strangers to the oppressive feelings which spring from a train or a combination of afflictions, and cannot estimate the nameless and numberless ingredients which embitter the sufferer's cup. Their thoughts, in the contemplation of man's history and condition, can expatiate only on the health and comfort and plenty with which they have themselves been familiar. With their minds fixed on these, they are ill able even to suppress

* Isa. lxiii. 8, 9, 15, 16.

† Heb. ii. 17, 18.

a rising wonder at what they are apt to reckon the unaccountable outcry of a distressed pauper. Even when a relative or an endeared friend is the sufferer who comes before them, their sympathy is but feeble in its power and partial in its extent, and requires an effort to call it into action. The very energies which are imparted to it are adventitious, act almost at random in the furnishing of relief, and may easily be damped by the offensiveness or the prolongation of its object's complaints. Yet all this pointlessness of effect, this feebleness of sympathy, this apparent stoicism in respect to the common humanities of our nature, may spring from no natural obtuseness of feeling or want of a proper capacity of benevolence, but originates wholly in the individual's personal inexperience of adversity.

A man, on the other hand, who has himself long been encompassed with trial and perplexity, spontaneously stretches forth a helping hand to every sufferer whom he meets. He may be utterly unacquainted with the afflicted objects of his notice, and may have neither relationship with them nor other considerations to excite sympathetic feeling; yet, from the simple recollection of his personal sorrows, with the spectacles of misery before him to revive and quicken it, he involuntarily performs for them, with interest and ardour, the needful offices of kindness. In any case his compassion will be strong; but then, if possible, it will be strongest, when he descries an individual labouring under some specific and unusually sore calamity which he has personally endured. The accidental view of such a sufferer instantaneously recalls his own distress, rapidly summons to his view all the dismal nights which he spent under it, re-pourtrays to his imagination the mental anguish and corporeal torture he underwent, and places upon his sympathetic feelings an arrest so powerful that almost identifying the stranger's situation with his own, he eagerly gives him the aid which none but one situated like himself can afford. It is thus that men interest themselves most in the calamities of those who suffer as they have done themselves, and that, in an hour of distress, we are taught to look most confidentially to such for compassion and relief.

All this shews on what principles it was necessary that our Lord as a priest should be encompassed with infirmity, and illustrates the connexion of his personal sufferings with a power of compassionating the ignorant and those who are out of the way.

With the exception of those which are sinful, he had all the capacities and affections of our nature. In order to his acquiring an experimental power of rejoicing with those who rejoice and of weeping with those who weep, he had these expanded and regulated in harmony with the laws of our constitution, became subject to all the endless variety of troubles which desolate our waste and howling wilderness, and learned by experience the force and anguish of the diversified circumstances in which his followers are placed. Hunger, thirst, and weariness, exposure to cold dews and the midnight air, persecution from causelessly enraged enemies, hatred and mockery from kinsmen, desertion in seasons of sorest trial by approved friends, perpetual perils from robbers, from countrymen, and from false brethren, on the sea, by the wayside, and in the city,—these were the least of the tremendous sorrows which he endured. He was seized by all the terrors which congregate in the valley of death, and ‘offered up supplications and prayers with strong crying and tears’ for deliverance from their power. Forty days and forty nights was he in the desert, wasting under lassitude, fatigue, and long-continued abstinence, exposed alternately to the chill dews of night and the scorching sun-beams of day, plied incessantly with the wily temptations of the devil, and attacked by the fiercest and most fiery onsets of infernal spirits. Thus did God, in bringing many sons to glory, make the Captain of their salvation perfect, in his sacerdotal qualifications, through sufferings.* Without them, he would have been but ill-qualified to exercise all the forbearance, long-suffering, and bowels of mercies which are necessary to his bearing with his people and succouring them amidst their wanderings, privations, and conflicts in the vale of tears. Since, however, ‘although he was a Son, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, he has become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.’† The natural and moral evils which environ them are numerous, and their sins of ingratitude grievous and frequent; yet will these have no tendency whatever to make him cast his children off, nor will they ever succeed in damping the ardour of his love, in enfeebling the energy of his compassion, or in lessening his readiness to give mercy to pardon and grace to help in every time of need. ‘Having

* Heb. ii. 10.

† Heb. v. 8, 9.

loved his own who are in the world, he loves them to the end.'^a

' Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea they may forget; yet will not I forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.'[†]

^a John xiii. 1.

[†] Isa. xlii. 15, 16.

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THE END.

ERRATA.

- Page 56, line 4 from bottom, for *typical* read *tropical*.
— 180, — 14 — top, for *presented* read *definite*.
— 188, — 3 — bottom, and other places, for *pass-
able* read *passible*
— 293, — 2 — top for *that* read *than*.
— 371, — 1 — bottom, for *end of days* read *end
of life*.
— 429, — 15 — top; dele *not*.

